

CAREER BUSINESS EDUCATION LIFESTYLE

DIVERSITY

COMM

June 2024

MAGAZINE

THINKING ABOUT A
**CAREER IN
FINANCE?**

**CELEBRATE
JUNETEENTH**

**5 GREAT
REASONS
TO GO FOR
YOUR
MBA**

**TOP
LGBTQ+
FRIENDLY
COMPANIES**

A full-page portrait of Queen Latifah. She is smiling, wearing a bright orange blazer over a white top. She has long, straight brown hair and is wearing large, gold, geometric earrings and a gold ring. Her hands are clasped in front of her.

**QUEEN
LATIFAH**
SHINING & EMPOWERING





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"It's refreshing to see Danaher's robust commitment to DE+I, and the ways in which the organization fosters growth and opportunity for everyone. I'm so grateful that the focus on continuous improvement includes ensuring equity and inclusion are centered in the ways we work."

Tabitha
Manager DE+I
Beckman Coulter Diagnostics
Vice-Chair LGBTQ + Friends US & Canada and Member of Asian Descent + Friends, Black + Friends, Latinx + Friends, and Women + Friends

At Danaher, we believe that diverse perspectives unlock scientific breakthroughs. As a global science and technology innovator, we're committed to building and sustaining a workplace that fosters diversity, equity, and inclusion. We believe in providing many pathways to success, allowing good ideas to flourish freely, and empowering everyone to reach their fullest potential.

We invite you to explore the variety of career opportunities that await you at Danaher. Visit jobs.danaher.com and join our [talent community](#) today.



Black&Journal





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We are inclusive.

At Colgate Palmolive, "We are inclusive" is not just a statement, but a lived reality.

We create a culture of belonging where everyone is welcomed, valued and empowered to contribute their unique perspective.

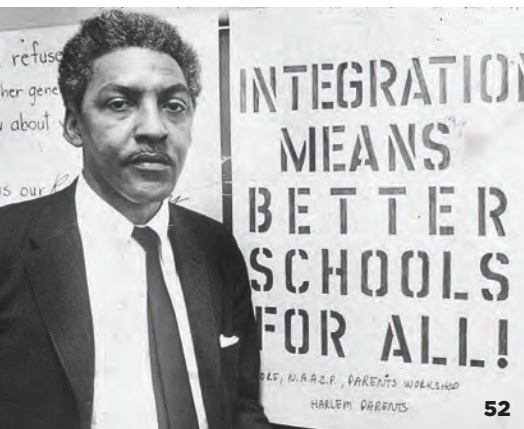


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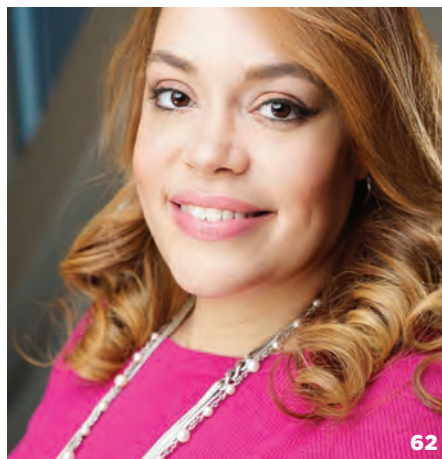
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Hispanic Community

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Diverseability Community

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STEM Community

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Yes, we serve millions of people in thousands of locations across the country. But what really matters is the size of our heart. Because every day, in every way, we are passionate about bringing our heart to every moment of your health™.

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 **CVS**
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Standing Proud

This month, we raise our rainbow flag high and celebrate all of the beautiful colors of diversity that create PRIDE. The June issue is dedicated to our LGBTQ+ community, advocates and allies—we here at *DiversityComm Magazine* see you and we stand with you.

Standing right with us is the undisputed queen of hip-hop and this month's cover story, Queen Latifah. An entertainment icon and music legend in her own right, Latifah has never been shy about empowering women, speaking up for body positivity or supporting the LGBTQ+ community. After receiving *BET's* Lifetime Achievement Award in 2021, Latifah ended her powerful speech by officially coming out and sharing her love for partner, Eboni Nichols, and their son, Rebel. "Eboni, my love. Rebel, my love. Peace. Happy Pride!" Read more about Latifah's legendary career and advocacy on page 70.

If you're looking for a stand-out career, reading "Explore a Finance Career: Opportunities & Insights" on page 50 may give you some much-needed inspiration. Been sending out resumes lately but not getting much response? "Optimizing Your Resume for ATS: Career Success Strategies" on page 54 might be a game-changer for you. And whether you're a longtime LGBTQ+ business owner or just getting started, reading "Thriving Queer-Owned Businesses: Benefits of Certification" on page 66 may open the door to new opportunities.

As a member of the LGBTQ+ community myself, I applaud all of the advocates, allies and supporters who continue to stand up and speak out. I am proud to stand with you—not just this month, but every single day of the year. Happy Pride!



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Kat Castagnoli,
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July 2024 FOCUS

What's Trending in the Black Community



**TOGETHER,
LET'S LEAD.**



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INSURANCE



MassMutual



MERCK
INVENTING FOR LIFE



NORTHROP
GRUMMAN



rh Robert Half

BEST
OF THE | 2024
BEST

At DiversityComm, Inc., we believe that diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) are the foundations of success for any business or organization. Tracking the trends, staying aware of forward-thinking DEI policies and being listed on the top lists of diversity and equity leaders is what it's going to take for businesses, institutions and nonprofits to continue growing and performing. According to one study from Ethisphere, ethical companies outperform their competition by 7.1%. Though another study from i-Sight found that those on key DEI lists and rankings made more than double the profits of comparable companies. Our Best of the Best list seeks to recognize the organizations that have gone above and beyond to create more inclusive, equitable workspaces where diverse

talent can be recruited, developed and retained. We recognize them for their commitment to uplifting values and fostering a great workplace culture. In the words of Mona Lisa Faris, our founder and publisher, "Diversity is your superpower," she said, "Embrace it. When you embrace and understand the value of diversity, you have the capability to maximize your creativity, problem-solving skills and inclusivity which ultimately leads to increasing profitability. It allows you to compete on a whole other level businesswise, both internally and in reputation." For more information, please visit diversitycomm.net/methodology. To receive a survey invite for the next evaluation please contact surveys@diversitycomm.net.

LGBTQ+

FRIENDLY COMPANIES

3M Co.	BlackRock	Eastman Chemical Co.
Abbott	Boeing Co.	eBay Inc.
AbbVie Inc.	Boston Scientific Corp.	Ecolab Inc.
Accenture	Brighthouse Financial, Inc.	Edward Jones
ADP	Bristol Myers Squibb	Eli Lilly and Company
AECOM	Caesars Entertainment Inc.	Equinix
Airbnb Inc.	Capital One	Ericsson Inc.
Alaska Airlines	Cardinal Health Inc.	F.N.B. Corporation
Alight Solutions	Cargill Inc.	Farmers Insurance Group
Allstate Insurance Co.	CBRE Inc.	FedEx
Altice USA, Inc.	Centene Corp.	Fidelity National Information Services Inc.
Altria Group Inc.	Charles Schwab & Co. Inc.	Fifth Third Bancorp
Amazon.com Inc.	Chevron Corp.	First American Financial Corp.
American Airlines	Chipotle Mexican Grill Inc.	Ford Motor Co.
American Express	Citigroup Inc.	FOX Corporation
Ameriprise Financial Inc.	Citizens Financial Group	Freddie Mac
AmerisourceBergen Corp.	City of Tallahassee	GE Appliances
Amgen Inc.	Cognizant Technology Solutions Corp.	General Dynamics
Anschutz Entertainment Group, Inc.	Colgate-Palmolive Co.	General Dynamics Information Technology (GDIT)
Apollo Global Management Inc.	Comcast NBCUniversal	General Mills Inc.
Apple Inc.	Corning	General Motors Co.
Applied Materials Inc.	Corteva Agriscience	Gilead Sciences Inc.
Aramark Corp.	Cummins Inc.	Global Atlantic Financial Group
Arconic	Cushman & Wakefield	Global Payments Inc.
Assurant	CVS Health	Google
AT&T	Danone North America	GSK
Avery Dennison	Darden Restaurants Inc.	Henry Schein Inc.
Bain & Co. Inc./Bridgespan Group	Dell Technologies Inc.	Hewlett Packard Enterprise Co.
Bank of America	Diageo North America	Hilton
Barilla America Inc.	Dick's Sporting Goods, Inc.	Honeywell International Inc.
BASF Corp.	Discover Financial Services	Hormel Foods Corp.
Bayer U.S. LLC	Dish Network	Humana
BDO USA, PC	Dow	Huntington Bancshares Inc.
Best Buy Co. Inc.	Duke Energy Corp.	Hyatt Hotels Corp.
Biogen	Dupont de Nemours, Inc.	

IBM Corp.	Nordstrom Inc.	The Coca-Cola Co.
Intel Corp.	Northern Trust Corp.	The Estee Lauder Companies Inc.
Interpublic Group of Companies Inc.	Northrop Grumman	The Goldman Sachs Group Inc.
Intuit Inc.	Northwestern Mutual	The Guardian Life Insurance Co. of America
J. M. Smucker Co.	Omnicom Group	The Hartford Financial Services Group Inc.
Jacobs Engineering Group Inc.	Oracle Corp.	The Hershey Co.
Johnson & Johnson	Oshkosh Corporation	The Kraft Heinz Company
JPMorgan Chase & Co.	Panasonic Corporation of North America	The ODP Corporation
Kellogg Co.	Paramount	The Bank of New York Mellon Corp.
Keurig Dr Pepper Inc.	Paramount Global	The Walt Disney Company
KeyCorp	PayPal Holdings Inc.	TIAA
Kimberly-Clark Corp.	PepsiCo Inc.	T-Mobile USA Inc.
KPMG	Pfizer Inc.	Toyota Motor North America
Lam Research Corp.	PG&E	Travel + Leisure Co.
Levi Strauss & Co.	PGA TOUR, Inc.	The Travelers Companies Inc.
Liberty Mutual Insurance	Phillips 66	Truist Financial
Lincoln National Corp.	Pitney Bowes Inc.	U.S. Bank
Lockheed Martin Corp.	PPG Industries Inc.	Uber Technologies Inc.
Lowe's Companies, Inc.	Procter & Gamble Co.	Unilever
LPL Financial Holdings Inc.	Prudential Financial Inc.	Union Pacific Corp.
Lumen Technologies	Quest Diagnostics Inc.	United Airlines
Macy's, Inc.	Qurate Retail Group	United Health Group
ManpowerGroup	Raymond James Financial Inc.	United Parcel Service
Marathon Petroleum Corp.	RBC Wealth Management	United Rentals, Inc.
Marriott International Inc.	Roche Diagnostics Corp.	Univar Solutions Inc.
Marsh & McLennan Companies Inc.	Rockwell Automation Inc.	Unum Group
Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Co.	Ross Stores Inc.	USAA
Mastercard	RTX	Vanguard Group Inc.
McDonald's Corp.	Salesforce	Verizon Communications Inc.
McKesson Corp.	Sanofi	Vertex Pharmaceuticals Inc.
McKinsey & Co. Inc.	SC Johnson	VF Corp.
Medtronic	Sephora	Victoria's Secret & Co.
Meijer Inc.	ServiceNow	Visa
Merck	Sodexo	Vizient Inc.
Michelin	Southern Co.	VMware Inc.
Micron Technology Inc.	Southwest Airlines Co.	Voya Financial
Microsoft Corp.	Starbucks Corp.	W.W. Grainger Inc.
Moderna Inc.	State Farm Group	Walmart Inc.
Molson Coors Beverage Company	Steelcase Inc.	Warner Music Group
Moody's Corporation	Synchrony	Wells Fargo
Morgan Stanley	Takeda Pharmaceuticals USA Inc.	WestRock
National Grid USA	Target	Whirlpool Corp.
Nationwide	TD Bank	Windstream Holdings
NCUA	TD SYNEX Corporation	Xcel Energy Inc.
Nestlé USA Inc.	Teva Pharmaceuticals USA Inc.	Xerox Corporation
New York Life Insurance Company	Texas Instruments Incorporated	Zoetis Inc.
Newell Brands Inc.	The Cigna Group	



The Top Financial Companies in DEI

This month, *DiversityComm Magazine* is recognizing 12 outstanding financial institutions who are going above and beyond to implement diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) throughout their companies. Here is what makes these financial firms stand out:



THE TOP FINANCIAL COMPANIES IN DEI

Discover: Banking Institution

EY: Accounting Firm

HUMANA: Health Insurance Company

JPMorgan Chase: Private Bank

KPMG International: Accounting Firm

Mastercard: Payment Technology Company

NCUA: Credit Union Association

PNC Financial Services: Bank Holding Company

Rocket Mortgage: Mortgage Lender

USAA: Investment Services

Visa: Card Payment Service

Wells Fargo: Banking Institution



DISCOVER: BANKING INSTITUTION

How They're Applying DEI:

- ✓ Has an official statement expressing their commitment to diversity and inclusion
- ✓ Implements diverse hiring practices
- ✓ Hosts a council or board dedicated to ensuring inclusive practices
- ✓ Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) or similar professional networking system
- ✓ Supplier diversity opportunities

What Makes Them Stand Out:

Discover has numerous programs that focus on hiring within economically-challenged areas. They've teamed up with local universities, nonprofit organizations and community events to ensure equal opportunities to financial wellness across the country. Cities that have benefited include Greenwood, Delaware; Whitehall, Ohio; and Chicago's South Side.

DISCOVER



JACK TAYLOR/GETTY IMAGES

EY: ACCOUNTING FIRM

How They're Applying DEI:

- ✓ Has an official statement expressing their commitment to diversity and inclusion
- ✓ Hosts a council, board or evaluation system dedicated to ensuring inclusive practices
- ✓ Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) or similar professional networking system
- ✓ Supplier diversity opportunities
- ✓ Recognized by the Global Equality Standard

What Makes Them Stand Out: As part of its dedication to DEI practices, EY established the Neuro-Diverse Centers of Excellence, which commits to hiring neurodivergent individuals across professions in the company. This program has successfully contributed to increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities and was recognized by the World Economic Forum's Global Parity Alliance as a leading DEI initiative.



IGOR GOLOVIN/ISTOCK/GETTY IMAGES VIA GETTY IMAGES

HUMANA: HEALTH INSURANCE COMPANY

How They're Applying DEI:

- ✓ Has an official statement expressing their commitment to diversity and inclusion
- ✓ Implements diverse hiring practices
- ✓ Hosts a council, board or evaluation system dedicated to ensuring inclusive practices
- ✓ Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) or similar professional networking system
- ✓ Supplier diversity opportunities

What Makes Them Stand Out:

HUMANA has a commitment to hiring not only diverse individuals, but provides job opportunities and exceptional health care benefits for military service members, veterans and people looking for work post-retirement. Their program keeps the experiences and lifestyles of the individual in mind and has been awarded numerous "Top Employer" awards.

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JPMORGAN CHASE: PRIVATE BANK

How They're Applying DEI:

- ✓ Has an official statement expressing their commitment to diversity and inclusion
- ✓ Implements diverse hiring practices
- ✓ Hosts a council, board or evaluation system dedicated to ensuring inclusive practices
- ✓ Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) or similar professional networking system
- ✓ Supplier diversity opportunities

What Makes Them Stand Out: In 2020, JPMorgan Chase announced that it would be committing \$30 billion to closing the racial wealth gap and advancing inclusion in undeserved and underrepresented communities across the country. This program has since gone on to provide thousands of financial resources, job opportunities, public spaces and housing units for these groups.

CHRIS HONDROS/GETTY IMAGES

KPMG INTERNATIONAL: ACCOUNTING FIRM

How They're Applying DEI:

- ✓ Has an official statement expressing their commitment to diversity and inclusion
- ✓ Implements diverse hiring practices
- ✓ Hosts a council, board or evaluation system dedicated to ensuring inclusive practices
- ✓ Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) or similar professional networking system
- ✓ Supplier diversity opportunities

What Makes Them Stand Out:

Through their Accelerate 2025 program, KPMG not only hires diverse talent, but helps them thrive. By providing the resources and training they need, employees within the company are provided advancement opportunities to learn different roles and earn the knowledge they need to be promoted into higher level positions. This has led to an increase of diverse leaders within the company.

MIKE KEMP/IN PICTURES VIA GETTY IMAGES





MASTERCARD

MASTERCARD: PAYMENT TECHNOLOGY COMPANY

How They're Applying DEI:

- ✓ Has an official statement expressing their commitment to diversity and inclusion
- ✓ Implements diverse hiring practices
- ✓ Hosts a council, board or evaluation system dedicated to ensuring inclusive practices
- ✓ Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) or similar professional networking system
- ✓ Supplier diversity opportunities

What Makes Them Stand Out:

Mastercard aims to enforce DEI practices outside of their company through the Mastercard Center for Inclusive Growth and the Mastercard Impact Fund. These two programs help the company to support and grow minority-owned small businesses and diverse community leaders on a global level.

NCUA: CREDIT UNION ASSOCIATION

How They're Applying DEI:

- ✓ Has an official statement expressing their commitment to diversity and inclusion
- ✓ Implements diverse hiring practices
- ✓ Hosts a council, board or evaluation system dedicated to ensuring inclusive practices
- ✓ Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) or similar professional networking system
- ✓ Supplier diversity opportunities

What Makes Them Stand Out: In NCUA's 2022 Self-Assessment Report, the company scored highest in its hiring and recruitment efforts in diversity. It showed that 84% of participants agreed that proactive steps were taken in the hiring, recruiting, retention and promotion of diverse employees, while 80% saw the same effort made for board and leadership positions. NCUA also scored high in their efforts to partner and build networks with organizations that promote the importance of DEI practices in the workplace.



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

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JAAP ARRIENS/PHOTO VIA GETTY IMAGES

PNC FINANCIAL SERVICES: BANK HOLDING COMPANY

How They're Applying DEI:

- ✓ Has an official statement expressing their commitment to diversity and inclusion
- ✓ Implements diverse hiring practices
- ✓ Hosts a council, board or evaluation system dedicated to ensuring inclusive practices
- ✓ Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) or similar professional networking system
- ✓ Supplier diversity opportunities

What Makes Them Stand Out:

PNC offers the Growing Forward Mentoring Program to help employees of differing backgrounds to connect with one another. This program not only increases work morale, performance and retention, but creates a sense of belonging and a desire to move up within the company.

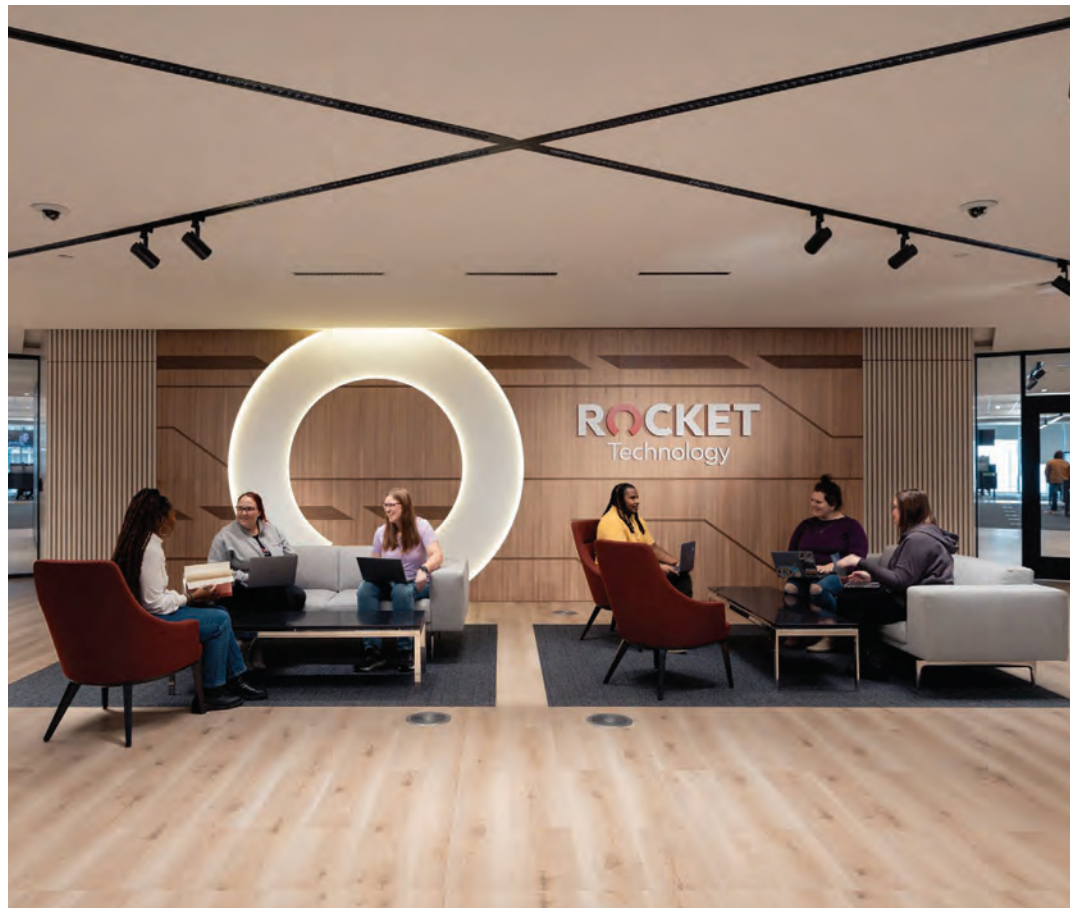
ROCKET MORTGAGE: MORTGAGE LENDER

How They're Applying DEI:

- ✓ Has an official statement expressing their commitment to diversity and inclusion
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What Makes Them Stand Out:

Rocket Mortgage is the founder of the Rocket Community Fund and the For More Profit organization that works together to provide housing, employment and educational opportunities to economically challenged and underrepresented areas. Rocket Mortgage is also a huge supporter of education and offers free funding for college degrees, certifications, trainings and courses for their employees.



ROCKET COMPANIES

USAA: INVESTMENT SERVICES

How They're Applying DEI:

- ✓ Has an official statement expressing their commitment to diversity and inclusion
- ✓ Implements diverse hiring practices
- ✓ Hosts a council, board or evaluation system dedicated to ensuring inclusive practices
- ✓ Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) or similar professional networking system
- ✓ Supplier diversity opportunities

What Makes Them Stand Out: Though their primary focus is on military service members, veterans and their families, USAA's partnerships with diverse organizations allows them to extend their reach to some of the most underrepresented communities. They're proud partners with organizations like ROMBA, NSBE and SHPE, and have donated \$50 million to advancing racial equality within the military community.



USAA



JEFFREY GREENBERG/UNIVERSAL IMAGES GROUP VIA GETTY IMAGES

VISA: CARD PAYMENT SERVICE

How They're Applying DEI:

- ✓ Has an official statement expressing their commitment to diversity and inclusion
- ✓ Implements diverse hiring practices
- ✓ Hosts a council, board or evaluation system dedicated to ensuring inclusive practices

- ✓ Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) or similar professional networking system
- ✓ Supplier diversity opportunities

What Makes Them Stand Out: Through the Visa Foundation, the financial institution uses

their resources to spread financial, business and community wellness around the world. This includes the Equitable Access Initiative, a five-year program that invests \$200 million into supporting diversely-owned small and micro businesses around the world.

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WELLS FARGO: BANKING INSTITUTION

How They're Applying DEI:

- ✓ Has an official statement expressing their commitment to diversity and inclusion
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- ✓ Hosts a council, board or evaluation system dedicated to ensuring inclusive practices
- ✓ Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) or similar professional networking system
- ✓ Supplier diversity opportunities

What Makes Them Stand

Out: Along with providing hiring opportunities for diverse populations, Wells Fargo has specialty resources for specific groups. They provide training and customized career portals for veterans and have a program for neurodiverse individuals looking to work for the company.

JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES

An advertisement for the Insight 2024 FLOW Convention & Expo. On the left, a woman's face is shown in profile, looking upwards, with vibrant, swirling smoke in shades of purple, blue, and green around her. On the right, the text reads: "INSIGHT 2024" with a logo above it, "FLOW" in large bold letters with a yellow triangle in the 'O', and "CONVENTION & EXPO" below it. At the bottom, it says "Dive into the immersive experience of Insight 2024 FLOW June 17-21 in the vibrant city of Las Vegas."

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Our Mission

USDA's Risk Management Agency serves America's agricultural producers through effective, market-based risk management tools to strengthen the economic stability of farmers, ranchers, and rural communities. We are committed to increasing the availability and effectiveness of Federal crop insurance as a risk management tool.



Pictured: RMA Administrator Marcia Bunger with faculty of the University of Arkansas

“ We are securing the future of American agriculture by developing world class risk management tools with the brightest minds in the industry. ”

— Marcia Bunger, Administrator of
USDA's Risk Management Agency

USDA's Risk Management Agency, along with the Farm Service Agency and the Natural Resources and Conservation Service, serves America's farmers and ranchers with products, programs, and training that provides economic opportunity, helps rural America thrive and nourish the nation, and preserves natural resources.

More than 22,000 employees working throughout the country share data, analysis, IT systems, real property, other resources, and implementation roles and responsibilities that are designed to support the programs benefiting our customers.

We are always looking to hire highly skilled and motivated individuals, particularly those with strengths in science, technology, engineering, and math.

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Working for the USDA Risk Management Agency

Haley Kottman, Statistician, Risk Management Agency

Before RMA, I taught middle school and high school math for a few years before going back to school to get my Master's degree in Statistics in 2020. I started at RMA in 2021 and I work remotely from the Kansas City area with my spouse, who also works from home. I share my office space with three dogs who provide various services from supervisor to security. Outside of work hours, I spend a lot of time with yarn, either knitting or crocheting. I also enjoy roller skating, swimming, reading, and board games. Additionally, I've been playing Dungeons and Dragons weekly with the same group of friends for the past 13 years (I currently play a toy-poodle rogue after being the DM for 10+ years).

Working at RMA has been very fulfilling, as a member of the Actuarial Branch, I have a variety of commodities that I calculate rates and yields for some of our various insurance products and programs. However, my major assignment is being the rates person for the Whole Farms Revenue Protection program. This is a program that offers insurance for over 400 commodities all across the United States; think reindeer in Alaska, lychee in Hawaii, and every fruit, vegetable, and herb you would find at your local farmer's market. It's a program that offers opportunities to learn something new everyday.

One example of something new was, over the past winter, our branch put together a 10-week series of workshops that

detailed what we do. It was a great opportunity to use my past experience as an educator in this new context. 10 weeks is a long time and I'm proud we were able to present such a comprehensive series of workshops that will be useful for years to come.

Food-insecurity impacts many individuals every day; some people worry about where their next meal will come from. USDA focus is one step earlier on the security of the people who grow that food. Crop insurance provides peace of mind to producers to ensure that a bad year won't ruin them. Whatever happens this year or next year they can continue producing food and clothing for Americans.

The thing about RMA is even if you have experience with insurance, crop insurance is its own beast. I'm constantly learning about new fruits and vegetables, different perils for crops, and agricultural technologies. It's a rare day that I don't learn something new. Additionally, the work is both independent and collaborative. On my own, I'll investigate a program's rating methodology then work together with other teams to review their investigations to build a thorough picture of an insurance product.

The LGBTQIA+ community here at USDA and the federal workplace has been such a huge asset for me. There are times when I've had questions about things and there are so many people there offering answers, suggestions, advice, an ear to listen, whatever I may need. Just last year I was supposed to travel for work to a state that is not a safe place for transgender people. I consulted other trans and

LGBTQIA+ people about what to do there to be safe, what my rights and options were, and what their thoughts were.

Ultimately, I decided it wasn't safe to travel there and my leadership all the way up supported that decision. My leadership and team has always been so supportive that not once did it cross my mind that I would face professional repercussions for this decision. I know that I'm lucky in that.

There are so many benefits to working for the federal government as an LGBTQIA+ member. Knowing I can't lose my job because of my gender or relationship status while working in a state that does not guarantee me those same rights is a huge boon. And even further, so much of the gender-affirming care that is necessary for my mental and medical well-being is covered by my federal employee insurance. And while I am very happy where I am, I know that in the future if I wanted to take on a different role, I'd have many opportunities to do so within USDA and across the federal government.



Haley Kottman
They/Them



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Juneteenth: History & Meaning

On June 17, 2021, President Joe Biden signed a bill into law that declared Juneteenth as the newest federal holiday. It became one of the five date-specific federal holidays in the United States and is recognized by government-based organizations, schools and offices nationwide. As we enter into our third year of Juneteenth's official federal birthday, let's take the time to look back at the history and meaning of the holiday.

What is Juneteenth?

Otherwise known as Freedom Day or Emancipation Day, Juneteenth began on June 19, 1865, when Union troops marched into Galveston Bay, Texas. They had come to the city with news that the Civil War had ended two and a half years prior and that all enslaved peoples within the state had been set free under Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. The bill, signed by Lincoln on New Year's Day 1863, stated that enslaved people in the Civil War's seceded states were required to be set free, and Texas was the last state to be delivered the news. While the June 19th date only confirmed the freedom of enslaved people in certain states, it is often recognized as the beginning of the end of slavery in the United States.

The official end would come nearly six months later, on December 6, 1965, when the 13th Amendment was added to the U.S. Constitution. Under this law, the Amendment declared freedom to all slaves in every state saying:

"All persons held as slaves within any State, or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free."

Becoming a Holiday

On the first anniversary of the



MICHAELA MCCOY/GETTY IMAGES

Members of the Washington Wizards and Washington Mystics basketball teams rally at the MLK Memorial to support Black Lives Matter and to mark the anniversary of Juneteenth in Washington, D.C.

Soldiers coming to Galveston, Texas, church communities held the first-ever Juneteenth celebrations. These recognitions quickly gained traction throughout the South, especially amongst African American communities, and became commercialized in the 1920s and 30s. Celebrations of Juneteenth went from small gatherings to larger-scale events consisting of concerts, food festivals, historical reenactments, family reunions, street fairs and so much more.

These celebrations remained predominately in the Southern states until the 1960s and 1970s, when they gained further popularity during the Civil Rights Movement. The holiday became a symbol of pride and equality among Black Americans, leading to several states passing official legislation to recognize the day.

Throughout the 2000s and 2010s, activism to make the holiday federally recognized grew. Spurred on by

the Black Lives Matter movement of 2020—in addition to campaigning from the Congressional Black Caucus and the National Juneteenth Observance Foundation and activist Opal Lee—the holiday became federally recognized in June of 2021 in a unanimous vote by the Senate as well as with an overwhelming majority in the House of Representatives. It was signed into law on June 17, 2021, just two days before Juneteenth.

Celebrating Today

With its federal recognition intact, Juneteenth is now guaranteed as an additional day off for government employees and public schools. Many other places of employment recognize the holiday and close-up shop in its honor.

If you're looking to learn more about Juneteenth or Black history, here are some highly recommended materials:

- *Four Hundred Years* by Ibram

- X. Kendi and Keisha N. Blain

- *The 1619 Project* by Nicole Hannah-Jones
- *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates
- *Juneteenth* by Ralph Ellison
- *The Juneteenth Story* (children's book) by Allian L. Agostini
- *Opal Lee and What It Means to Be Free: The True Story of the Grandmother of Juneteenth* (children's book) by Alice Faye Duncan

Today, family gatherings, church services, musical performances and festivals are still the most popular ways to recognize Juneteenth. These celebrations often include eating red food, such as red velvet cake and watermelon, and barbecued favorites like ribs and brisket. Additionally, many people use the day to shop at Black-owned businesses, support activism efforts surrounding Black and African American communities and to educate themselves on Black history.

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Black Representation Finally Coming to Daytime Soap Operas



Executive Producer Sheila Ducksworth attends the premiere of TV One's *Media* at Pacific Design Center on Feb. 13, 2017 in West Hollywood, California.



Bryton James is among the few Black actors to play a recurring character in a soap opera. He portrays Devon Hamilton in the long-running soap *The Young and the Restless*.



Diamond White, who stars as Paris Buckingham in *The Bold and the Beautiful*, is one of the few Black actors to play a recurring role in a soap opera.

A joint venture between CBS Studios and the NAACP is developing a new daytime drama for the CBS Television Network.

The series, titled *The Gates*, will follow the lives of a wealthy Black family in a posh, gated community and will be the first soap opera with a predominately Black cast to air in 35 years. Michele Val Jean, who has written over 2,000 episodes of daytime dramas and won multiple Daytime Emmy and WGA Awards for her work on *The Bold and the Beautiful* and *General Hospital*, will serve as writer and showrunner. Val Jean will also be an executive producer alongside Sheila Duckworth, Leon Russell, Derrick Johnson and Kimberly Doebereiner.

"*The Gates* will be everything we love about daytime drama, from

a new and fresh perspective," said Duckworth, president of the CBS Studios NAACP venture. "This series will salute an audience that has been traditionally underserved, with the potential to be a groundbreaking moment for broadcast television. With multi-dimensional characters, juicy storylines and Black culture front and center, *The Gates* will have impactful representation, one of the key touchstones of the venture."

The Gates will be produced by the CBS Studios and NAACP production venture in partnership with P&G Studios, a division of Procter & Gamble that was formed to increase a diverse range of voices as well as increase the visibility of Black artists on broadcast and streaming platforms in an ever-evolving media landscape. While

numbers have increased in diverse representation over the years, Black actors only made up about 12.9% of leading roles in cable-scripted shows in a 2023 survey conducted by Gitnux. A soap opera like *The Gates*, known for its numerous cast members, strives to increase this statistic once it airs.

"I'm excited to develop this project with CBS and P&G, two of the longest and most passionate champions of broadcast and daytime television, and the NAACP, whose enduring commitment to Black voices and artists is both powerful and inspiring," Duckworth continued in a press release. "I also want to thank CBS' George Cheeks, NAACP's Derrick Johnson and P&G's Marc Pritchard for their personal involvement and support to take our next step forward with *The*

Gates."

The Gates is especially important to daytime television as it will be one of the few remaining soap operas still airing on television, the first new soap opera to be announced since 1999 and will bring more diverse representation to a genre known to lack in its diversity. The project also aims to improve rankings and popularity compared to *Generations*, the first daytime soap opera to feature a Black family as the stars. Though beloved by the community, *Generations* received low ratings during its 13-month run, ultimately ending in 1991.

The project has no current release date at the time of writing, but it is projected to air in 2025.

Source: NAACP

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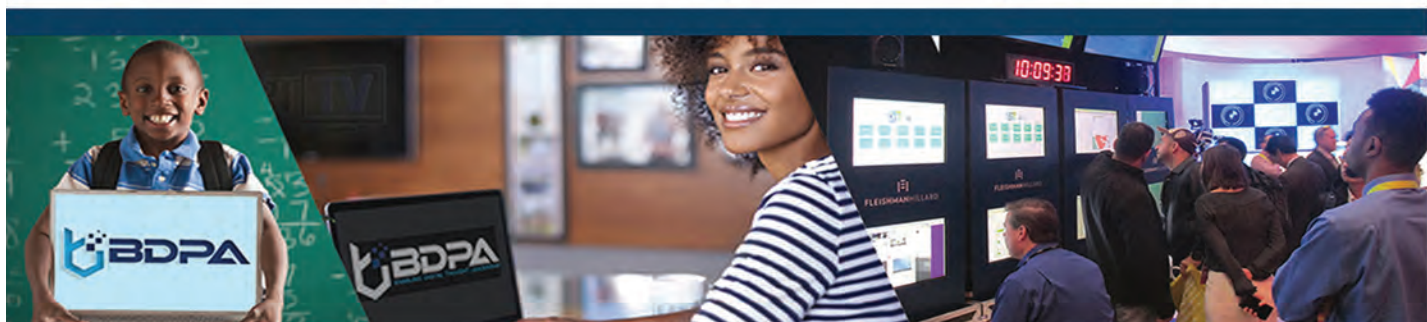
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Hispanic Achievement in Space: NASA's Newest Flight Director Diana Trujillo Reaches for the Stars

By Natalie Rodgers



Mars 2020 Arm Science Surface Phase Lead Diana Trujillo speaks onstage during the 2019 MAKERS Conference at Monarch Beach Resort on Feb. 7, 2019 in Dana Point, California.



Diana Trujillo speaks to Rolling Terrace Elementary School students on March 13, 2023 in Takoma Park, Maryland.

When she was 17 years old, Diana Trujillo moved to the United States from her home country of Colombia. With nothing but a love for science and \$300 to her name, Trujillo took on a job as a housekeeper until she enrolled at the University of Florida. Inspired by a magazine article about women working in aerospace, she decided to pursue a degree in aerospace engineering. Less than 20 years later, Trujillo is not only working for NASA but has earned a coveted title that further paves the way for Latinas in the STEM field.

Known as the first Hispanic woman immigrant to be accepted into the NASA Academy, one of the key players in the Perseverance Rover mission and the host of the first Spanish-language NASA transmission of a planetary landing, Trujillo has become one of the few people to wear the title of flight director. Under this role, Trujillo is responsible for leading teams of

flight controllers, researchers and engineers to make critical decisions during the launch process. These decisions are crucial for ensuring that NASA astronauts are safe during their stay in space. Though she was certified for the role in 2022, Trujillo recently enacted her skillset, becoming the 108th flight director at NASA's Johnson Space Center.

Trujillo announced her new official position via social media and her new 'Somos Flight' insignia. The symbol, dawned in Colombian colors, represents Trujillo's love for her home country and her passion for expanding space exploration.

"My heart swells with pride when I think of the great achievements of this team and what lies ahead," Trujillo told NASA. "This is the team that will write the next chapter in human history, taking us back to the Moon, Mars and beyond."

At just 44 years old, Trujillo started working for NASA before she earned her degree. As the first Hispanic immigrant woman admit-

ted into the NASA Academy, her knowledge and dedication earned her one of the two job offers the academy offered its students that year. She earned her bachelor's degree in aerospace engineering in 2007 and directly went to work for the Goddard Space Flight Center and Jet Propulsion Laboratory. There, she contributed to the Constellation program and worked with human and robotic space missions, especially concerning Mars exploration. Trujillo's biggest project came with the Mars Curiosity and Perseverance Rovers. She was a rover mission lead, deputy project system engineer, and deputy team chief of engineering operations on Curiosity. She was also responsible for the robotic arm on the Perseverance Rover.

In addition to her official duties with NASA, Trujillo wanted to ensure that STEM opportunities could have a more diverse reach. In 2021, Trujillo co-created and hosted #JuntosPerseveramos, NASA's

first-ever Spanish-language broadcast of a planetary landing. This allowed more people to partake in the live footage of one of the biggest milestones in space exploration—landing a rover on Mars.

"Mars helped me understand what it means to be an explorer," she told Colombia One. "Exploring this unknown world, taking panoramic views of its beautiful landscapes, finding the key ingredients that prove that Mars could have harbored life and then contemplating our pale blue dot in the night sky through the eyes of the rovers made me the space explorer I am today."

Trujillo's work is far from over with her new role as flight director and big plans for the exploration of Mars. As she leads the latest discoveries on the red planet, Trujillo will continue solidifying her name as an aerospace exploration icon.

Census Changes to Greatly Benefit Latinx Communities

In an effort to bring a more comprehensive look to the U.S. census, some changes are being made that will directly impact the Latinx and Hispanic communities.

Since 1997, the census has presented the question of race and ethnicity as two separate questions. The first question asked the census taker if they were Hispanic or Latino, and the second question provided a limited list of options for choosing the identity that best describes them. As of late March, the census will now only include one question regarding race and ethnicity and allow participants to go into detail about their background. This will ultimately expand the list of regions to choose from and replace the “other” checkbox category with a write-in option.

Census takers now have the option to check separate boxes for Hispanic or Latino and utilize the subcategories to go deeper into the details of their ethnic background. Subcategories on the census will include Mexican, Puerto Rican, Guatemalan, Dominican, Cuban and more.

These updates will not only be more inclusive but will allow the Census Bureau to have a more accurate grasp on the ethnic makeup of the country’s population and adhere to the needs of these communities accordingly.

“These updated standards are going to help us create more useful, accurate and up-to-date federal data on race and ethnicity,” an official with the Office of Management and Budget told the press. “And these revisions will enhance our ability to compare information and data across federal agencies and also understand again how our federal programs are serving a diverse America.”



JAMES NIELSEN / HOUSTON CHRONICLE/HEARST NEWSPAPERS VIA GETTY IMAGES

Karina Hernandez signs up for census information at Ida Love’s table while attending the Project Grad event hosted by the Houston Community College-Northeast on March 5, 2010 in Houston, Texas.

The new standards came into play after the results of the 2020 census were released, and a large percentage of people identified as “other,” especially amongst the Hispanic, Latinx, Middle Eastern and North African populations. Studies also showed that the former two-question format had a long history of being confusing for census takers and resulted in less accurate results. The new format, which will additionally include options to identify as Middle Eastern or North African instead of white or other, is suspected to ease the inaccuracies and confusion.

The updated census went live in late March and requires agencies to devise a compliance plan in the next 18 months. Agencies will have up to five years to enact these plans, but many predict that agencies will have these requirements in motion much sooner.



MANDEL NGANI/AFEP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Demonstrators rally at the Supreme Court in Washington, D.C. on April 23, 2019 to protest a proposal to add a citizenship question in the 2020 census.



Fostering Inclusion: Tailored Programs for Hispanic LGBTQIA+ Corporate Leaders

For the Hispanic Association on Corporate Responsibility (HACR) inclusion means celebrating the full diversity of the more than 63 million Hispanics living in the United States including those who identify as LGBTQIA+. The national nonprofit has a 38-year history of promoting The Power of Hispanic Inclusion™ in the corporate sector, and customized programs for the LGBTQIA+ demographic are indispensable for various compelling reasons:

➤ INTERSECTIONALITY

Hispanic LGBTQIA+ individuals face unique challenges. Targeted programs address these issues, fostering belonging and empowerment. HACR has also made a commitment to provide American Sign Language interpreters for all major conferences, ensuring leaders who are deaf/hard of hearing can participate in culturally inclusive leadership advancement.

➤ EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND RETENTION

Inclusive workplaces attract and retaining top talent, as they foster a sense of belonging and respect. Such environments boost morale, increase engagement, and enhance loyalty by offering tailored support for all employees. Inclusive organizations experience lower turnover rates and appeal to potential employees, thus positioning themselves as preferred employers in a competitive job market.

➤ INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY

Diversity is a key driver of innovation. By embracing the insights of Hispanic LGBTQIA+ top talent, organizations can unlock unique perspectives that fuel creative solutions. Inclusive environments are ripe for innovation, as diverse ideas and experiences intertwine to produce groundbreaking results.

➤ BIAS MITIGATION

Targeted programs that educate against bias and discrimination are crucial in building a safe and inclusive workplace where all employees can thrive. By actively addressing issues of prejudice and inequity, these initiatives help create an environment of mutual respect and understanding. Such educational efforts not only raise awareness but also equip staff with the tools to challenge discriminatory behaviors and foster a culture of inclusivity.

➤ MEETING CONSUMER DEMANDS

Consumers increasingly expect companies to prioritize diversity and inclusion, viewing these values as integral to business ethics and corporate responsibility. By actively promoting Hispanic LGBTQIA+ leaders, companies not only enhance their reputations but also align more closely with the values of a diverse consumer base. As a result, companies that emphasize diversity in their leadership are better positioned to understand and meet the evolving needs of their diverse customers, fostering loyalty and driving growth.

➤ BUSINESS GROWTH AND SUSTAINABILITY

Diverse workplaces have a proven financial edge, consistently outperforming their less diverse peers. By investing in tailored programming for Hispanic LGBTQIA+ leaders, companies can unlock the full potential of their workforce. This strategic approach ensures that a broad spectrum of perspectives is represented at all levels of decision-making, enhancing creativity and problem-solving abilities. In an increasingly diverse global market, embracing and promoting diversity is key to maintaining relevance and competitive advantage.

HACR integrates programming for intersectional audiences throughout the year, extending its commitment beyond just the month of June.

HACR encourages corporations to prioritize the development and implementation of programs designed to support the needs of Hispanic LGBTQIA+ corporate leaders. Over the years, our programs have consistently emphasized the importance of integrating LGBTQIA+ programming and incorporating authentic voices across all our initiatives. These discussions have not only enriched our organizational understanding but have also been pivotal in shaping a more inclusive and supportive environment. As we continue to learn and grow, we are proud to share powerful insights from Hispanic LGBTQIA+ leaders in Corporate America. Their experiences and reflections highlight the profound impact of our commitment to diversity and the significant strides we are making towards inclusivity in the professional world.

"I'm not just Latino, I'm openly gay. I think it's important that our employees see that, that our ratepayers see that, and that our shareholders see that... Frankly, I think it sends an important message to the rest of Corporate America that LGBTQ directors are here, need to be accounted for and should be represented."

Michael Camuñez, President and CEO of consulting firm Monarch Global Strategies and Independent Director at Edison International



HACR Executive Programs

A Look into the Boardroom is a standard component of the annual HACR Executive Programs conference, a two-day event curated for Hispanic executives in Corporate America. In this conversation-style session, the CEO of a company and a member of the company's board of directors share insights and perspectives on boardroom challenges, best practices, and leadership.

Annual HACR Symposium: The Power of Hispanic Inclusion™

The Annual HACR Symposium: The Power of Hispanic Inclusion brings together top Hispanic and Fortune 500 leaders to advance Hispanic inclusion across employment, procurement, philanthropy, and governance. This event allows corporate employees to learn from industry thought leaders about diversity, equity, and inclusion best practices using HACR's Corporate Inclusion Index™ (CII). In the session, "Beyond Inclusion: LGBTQ+ Belonging in Corporate America," we discussed creating welcoming environments for LGBTQ+ employees and explored actionable steps for fostering inclusivity and belonging.



"Join the fight. It's not just for me to reap the benefits of those who came before me. It's also for me to join in and say, 'Okay, for the next generation of folks more people are coming out now than ever before.'"

Noelle Ramirez, Vice President at Morgan Stanley

"When you share your pronouns you are letting members of the LGBTQ community know that you are an ally... It's really about letting people know that you care."

Adrián González Sierra, Senior Manager, Diversity, Inclusion & Belonging, Capital One



HACR Leadership Pipeline Program™

The annual HACR Leadership Pipeline Program™ offers rising Hispanic leaders working in Corporate America cutting-edge best practices for climbing the ranks through to the C-suite and onto corporate boards. The 2023 HACR Leadership Pipeline Program™ featured a session titled, "Navigating Difficult Conversations in Intersectional Teams," which included people who identify as LGBTQIA+, people who are neurodivergent, or with diverse abilities. The discussion centered on the complexities of engaging in conversations around diversity, equity, and inclusion while recognizing the unique experiences that people with intersecting identities bring to the table.

"My words are my truth, and my authenticity is what makes me the best employee at my organization. And it allows other people to live in their truth and to live in their authenticity."

Diana Feliz Oliva, Associate Director of Advocacy & Community Engagement, Gilead Sciences



HACR Latina Empow(h)er Summit™

The HACR Latina Empow(h)er Summit™ is a premier event for Latina executives seeking to enhance their leadership skills and connect with peers nationwide. This two-and-a-half-day summit features expert speakers and top executives who provide insights into achieving corporate success. The 2024 HACR Latina Empow(h)er Summit™ included a session titled "When You Are the Only One in the Room," addressing the challenges and strategies for Latinas who are often the sole representatives of their intersectional identities in corporate settings. This session offered practical advice on overcoming isolation, imposter syndrome, and tokenism, empowering attendees to advance confidently in their careers.

Visit hacr.org for more information about HACR and how you can get involved.



Billie Eilish Announces World Tour Ahead of *Hit Me Hard And Soft* Album Debut

By Natalie Rodgers

Singer-songwriter Billie Eilish recently announced the arena dates for her “Hit Me Hard And Soft: The Tour.” The North American leg of the tour will kick off in September and will run through December.

News of the tour followed the release of Eilish’s third studio album, *Hit Me Hard And Soft*, which debuted on May 17.

Eilish, who is a proponent of sustainability, has said the upcoming tour will be the most eco-friendly yet. For the forthcoming album, she will release eight variants of vinyl through her website as well as all major retailers and all produced with “the most sustainable practices available.” The standard black variant is made from 100% recycled black vinyl and the other seven colored vinyl issues will be made from ECO-MIX or BioVinyl.

Eilish proves yet again that there’s nothing she can’t do. She recently became the youngest person to be awarded two Academy



MYUNG J. CHUN / LOS ANGELES TIMES VIA GETTY IMAGES

Billie Eilish and Finneas O’Connell during the live telecast of the 96th Annual Academy Awards in Hollywood, March 10, 2024.



AMY SUSSMAN/GETTY IMAGES

Billie Eilish attends the 2024 Vanity Fair Oscar Party hosted by Radhika Jones at Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts on March 10, 2024 in Beverly Hills, California.

Awards at 22 years old, winning her first Oscar in 2022 for her song “No Time to Die,” featured in the latest *James Bond* film, and took home the same prize this year for *Barbie*’s “What Was I Made For?”

These awards were in the Best Original Song category and were additionally given to her co-writer and brother, Finneas O’Connell.

Eilish’s double Oscar win breaks a record set in 1938 by Luise Rainer, who had two Best Actress awards by the time she was 28. This also makes O’Connell, at 26 years old, the second youngest double awardee.

“I just didn’t think this would happen. I was not expecting this,” Eilish said during her acceptance speech, “I feel so incredibly lucky and honored.”

The sibling duo has been making music together since childhood, with O’Connell serving as a producer, co-writer and accompa-

nying instrumentalist and Eilish as co-writer and singer. They first gained acclaim in 2015 with the single “Ocean Eyes,” which contributed to the worldwide success of the EP “Don’t Smile at Me” a year later. This popularity only skyrocketed the duo’s fame in 2019 when Eilish released her first studio album, *When We All Fall Asleep, Where Do We Go?* The album became one of the best-selling albums of 2019 and was home to the Billboard Hot 100 top hit “bad guy.”

Since then, the siblings’ success—particularly Eilish’s—has done nothing but grow. By 2022, Eilish had been featured as an influential figure in *Time Magazine* and BBC and had won numerous accolades from the most prestigious award shows. Along with her wins at the American Music Awards, MTV Video Music Awards and the Golden Globes, Eilish is the recipient of nine Emmy Awards

including titles for Best New Artist, Record of the Year, Album of the Year and Song of the Year. These four wins made her the youngest person to receive the four general field categories at 18 and the first person born in the 21st century to win a GRAMMY.

Besides their popularity, the duo is known for incorporating themes on gender equality, civil rights and other social issues into their music—including their 2024 Oscar-winning song. Eilish and O’Connell’s “What Was I Made For?” not only gained acclaim for its usage in the *Barbie* film, driving home the movie’s central theme, but for its relatable messages around gender and identity.

“I’m so thankful for this song and for this movie and the way that it made me feel,” Eilish stated at the Oscars. “This goes out to everyone that was affected by the movie and how incredible it was.”



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Riken Yamamoto Honored with the Pritzker Architecture Prize



COURTESY OF TOMIO OHASHI

Yokosuka Museum of Art in Yokosuka, Japan (above). Situated between a highway and a large park, THE CIRCLE at Zürich Airport is the threshold between the airport and the city (right).



RICHARD A. BROOKS/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

U.S. Ambassador to Japan Rahm Emanuel shakes hands with Japanese architect Riken Yamamoto at the end of a media briefing at the ambassador's residence in Tokyo on March 7, 2024.



COURTESY OF FLUGHAFFEN ZÜRICH AG

The Pritzker Architecture Prize is the most coveted honor for architects worldwide. Since 1979, the Pritzker has recognized the most impactful, innovative living architects who are making a difference on an international level. This year, the prize went to Japanese architect Riken Yamamoto for his unique designs centered around community.

The 2024 jury specifically stated that Yamamoto was chosen for “creating awareness in the community in what is the responsibility of the social demand, for questioning the discipline of architecture to calibrate each individual architectural response, and above all for reminding us that in architecture, as in democracy, spaces must be created by the resolve of the people...”

Besides being visually interesting and effortlessly inviting, Yamamoto’s work has always put an emphasis on community. Believing privacy to have become over-favored in modern society, he believes that

society should prioritize interacting with one another and forming social bonds in order to thrive. At 78 years old, Yamamoto has spent the last 50 years creating housing plans, schools, civic spaces and more into visually unique spaces that encourage this very idea, with many of his projects spanning across Japan, the People’s Republic of China, the Republic of Korea and Switzerland.

“For me, to recognize space is to recognize an entire community,” Yamamoto expressed in a press release. “The current architectural approach emphasizes privacy, negating the necessity of societal relationships. However, we can still honor the freedom of each individual while living together in architectural space as a republic, fostering harmony across cultures and phases of life.”

Yamamoto has worked on a diverse array of projects, including airports, medical buildings, schools and universities and housing projects. Some of his best-known work

includes the Yokosuka Museum of Art, an underground art exhibit that uses cutouts in the walls and large windows to bring community and nature into the gallery experience; Iwadeyama Junior High School, a modern building built with ceiling-to-floor windows and wide-open spaces that allow those who visit to connect with nature and see into other classrooms; and THE CIRCLE at Zürich Airport, a futuristic-looking shopping and community space in Switzerland’s buzzing transportation center.

“One of the things we need most in the future of cities is to create conditions through architecture that multiply the opportunities for people to come together and interact,” Alejandro Aravena, jury chair and the 2016 prize winner, commented on Yamamoto’s public spaces. “He is a reassuring architect who brings dignity to everyday life. Normality becomes extraordinary. Calmness leads to splendor.”

But one of Yamamoto’s most

significant accomplishments can be found in his housing projects. By integrating his philosophy into his designs, Yamamoto’s floor plans are created to decrease loneliness and encourage neighborly bonding. For example, Pangyo Housing, one of his designs in Korea, is a complex of nine low-rise housing blocks designed with a nonprescriptive transparent ground floor, community deck, playgrounds, gardens and bridges that connect houses together. These aspects have helped its residents feel more part of an interconnected community than an isolated unit.

“Yamamoto develops a new architectural language that doesn’t merely create spaces for families to live, but creates communities for families to live together,” says Tom Pritzker, chair of the Hyatt Foundation, which sponsors the award. “His works are always connected to society, cultivating a generosity in spirit and honoring the human moment.”

PRIDE: Progress & Continuing the Fight

By Cile Johnson, Co-Founder, Talent Dimensions



It's Pride Month, and I've watched with amazement and gratitude as communities and organizations have stepped up their support for the LGBTQ+ community over the last couple of decades.

I am one of many members of this community who have gone from a very deep and dark closet to living a life I never expected some 3+ decades ago. It is one with much less fear (and, of course, that's relative given the state of this right now) and the opportunity to experience a life most people would consider normal. I no longer live two separate lives; I am married, which brings a host of financial and legal rights, and I finally feel like I can bring my whole and best self to every aspect of my life...I belong.

However, as I write this article, I realize that we live in a world where division is the norm and not the exception. Politics, media, extreme groups and others are amplifying messages that are tearing down the basic tenets of humanity. As we celebrate Pride this year, we need to acknowledge and celebrate the progress we've made while recognizing the sobering fact that the fight for LGBTQ+ equality is far from over.

In 2023, at least 510 anti-LGBTQ+ bills were introduced in state legislatures across the United States, which nearly tripled the number from 2022, according to the ACLU. Educa-

tion and health care were the primary targets of these bills, which included bans on accessing gender-affirming care for transgender youth and regulating curricula in public schools and universities.

By the end of 2023, 84 anti-LGBTQ+ laws had been enacted across 23 states, including 15 banning gender-affirming care for trans youth, and seven allowing the misgendering of trans students, according to the Human Rights Campaign (HRC).

The challenges go far beyond new legislation as workplace discrimination against LGBTQ+ employees remains widespread. A study by UCLA's Williams Institute found that 45.5% reported unfair treatment, including being fired or harassed due to their identity at some point in their careers. They also found that more than one-third of LGBTQ+ employees said they left a job during their lifetime due to treatment by their employer based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. Despite efforts made by many organizations to create safe and inclusive cultures, these numbers are just too high.

Anti-LGBTQ+ legislation and rhetoric have consequences for all members of the LGBTQ+ community, and those consequences are heightened by those who are most vulnerable. A 2023 Trevor Project survey found that 86% of transgender and non-binary youth said

that recent debates around anti-trans bills have negatively impacted their mental health, with 55% saying it impacted them "very negatively." That same survey revealed that 41% of LGBTQ+ youth seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year, including half of transgender and non-binary youth. While I don't have children, I have 12 nieces and nephews. The thought of any one of them considering life too unbearable to live is unfathomable. No child should be the target of hate and grow up with fear, shame and the inability to be who they are.

These are staggering statistics, and they illustrate the need to keep up the good fight. I want to thank the many organizations and individuals that get up every morning and do just that...fight. There are recent examples of where the fight may be gaining momentum, and many are cautiously optimistic that anti-LGBTQ+ legislation may be losing steam. In Georgia, a series of these bills did not pass and never made it to a vote, despite the make-up of the majorities in both chambers. The same was true in Florida, where 21 of 22 anti-LGBTQ+ bills failed, and in Kentucky, where no bills passed. We need to celebrate these victories and continue the fight for more.

My colleagues and I help organizations create cultures where ALL their employees

can achieve a sense of belonging. According to American psychologist Abraham Maslow, belonging is the 3rd fundamental human need after physiological and safety needs, and it is something we ALL want and need. We go about it in many ways, but we believe education leads to conversations that ultimately result in dialogue. It's this dialogue that creates an opening where the possibilities exist for shifting mindsets and perspectives. When we create that opening and begin to see the world and life experiences through the eyes of someone else, especially someone we don't understand, that's when we can tap into our humanity.



Cile Johnson is co-founder and Chief Business Officer at Talent Dimensions. She is a passionate advocate for driving organizational performance through the development of people...all people. Talent Dimension focuses on helping organizations create cultures where individuals can achieve a sense of belonging by leveraging all aspects of the talent management continuum.

Latest Pride News: LGBTQ+ Community Updates

This Pride Month, we take a look at some of the latest news and accomplishments of the LGBTQ+ community.



Elton John Becomes an EGOT Winner

This past awards season, Elton John became the 19th person to achieve EGOT status—winning an Emmy, GRAMMY, Oscar and Tony award throughout his career. His EGOT completion was solidified when his taped concert, *Elton John Live: Farewell from Dodger Stadium*, won the Best Variety Special Live award at the Emmy's. "We knew this show would be historic because it was going to be Elton's last ever show in North America on tour. We knew it would be historic because it was Disney's first-ever live global stream," said Ben Winston, one of the producers of the special, who accepted the award on the singer's behalf. "We didn't know it was going to be historic because it was going to win a man who has created the soundtrack to all of our lives—he's done so much great for society, who is all of our heroes—we didn't know that it was going to win him an EGOT." The Emmy will be added to John's collection of five GRAMMYS, two Oscars and a Tony award.



GETTY STOCK IMAGES

LGBTQ+ History to Now Be Taught in Washington Schools

A new bill has been signed into law, requiring Washington state schools to incorporate the histories and experiences of underrepresented groups into their curriculum. This will include teaching LGBTQ+ history in classrooms of all ages. The new curriculum will be fully developed by the summer of 2025 by the Washington State School Directors' Association and include topics around the queer communities, people with disabilities, immigrants and people of varying ethnic, racial and religious backgrounds. It will be implemented beginning with the 2025-2026 school year. "Our LGBTQ+ youth deserve to see themselves reflected in their education," the Washington State LGBTQ Caucus wrote on social media, "And with the signing of #SB5462 into law, that will soon be the reality in public schools across the state."

IAN GAVAN/GETTY IMAGES FOR HARLEQUINS

Elliot Page's New Project Highlights Queer History

Queer history is slowly but surely receiving a more prominent spotlight, but a new project produced by Elliot Page will recount the stories of the LGBTQ+ community in a whole new way. Joining New Canvas, an XR technology entertainment company, Page will be executive producing a virtual reality series adaptation of the book *When Brooklyn Was Queer*, a collection of untold stories of queer history in Brooklyn, New York. Utilizing virtual reality, audiences will get a three-dimensional, fully immersive history lesson of the events recounted in Hugh Ryan's book. While a release date for the unique series is yet to be announced, it is anticipated to be one of the most engaging tools to tell the stories of queer history to date. "Hugh's book upended my assumptions about the many forms of queerness that have long pulsed through our history," the show's writer, Agnes Borinsky, told *NBC News*. "With this amazing team, we get to overturn conventions about how stories get told and how we position ourselves relative to the past."

PRESLEY/ANIGETTY IMAGES FOR LACMA



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SEAN PAVONE, GETTY STOCK IMAGES

Columbia, Missouri Declared a Safe Haven for LGBTQ+ People

In a 6-1 vote by the town's city council, the city of Columbia, Missouri has officially been deemed a haven for the LGBTQ+ community. The ordinance declares that the city of Columbia is a safe place for people to express their support for queer communities, and it will work to provide as much social and political support as possible. This includes legal protections for free speech and expression for the LGBTQ+ community, research into ways to make it a safer and more accepting city and putting the state's law against gender-affirming care as the lowest priority for the city's law enforcement. The proclamation hopes to decrease bullying and hate crimes against the town's LGBTQ+ population and went into effect immediately once it passed.



EMMA MCINTYRE/GETTY IMAGES FOR IMDb

Colman Domingo Enjoys a Historic Awards Season

If you didn't know Colman Domingo before, you certainly know him now. Domingo became a high-light of the awards season when he was nominated for his portrayal of Bayard Rustin in the critically acclaimed film *Rustin* and as Mister in the newest adaptation of *The Color Purple*. His performances in both films earned him a Best Actor nomination at the Oscars—making Domingo the first Afro-Latino to be considered in the category. He also secured wins at the NAACP Image Awards, including Outstanding Actor in a Motion Picture and Best Supporting Actor. Most importantly, Domingo's presence significantly impacted conversations around representation for the LGBTQ+, Black and Latinx communities and the importance of showcasing their stories. "I do think it's an incredible time, the idea of seeing an openly queer man on this level playing these roles," Domingo told *Out Magazine*. "This has taken a long time, but it's here at the right time."



HGTV

Show Hosted by Queer Couple is a First for HGTV

For the first time, the home design channel HGTV will be premiering a show hosted by two queer women. Partners in life and work, Davina Thomasula and Kristin Leitheuser will be the hosts of *Small Town Potential*, which will focus on home renovations in Hudson Valley, New York. Thomasula will be acting as the show's real estate agent and designer, while Leitheuser will be in charge of the actual renovations. The show, which premiered on March 3rd, includes episodes in which they help clients and family members embrace a small-town lifestyle. On being the first female queer couple to host the show, Thomasula told Today.com, "I'm so nervous. But we want to be visible and create awareness...so we're proud to be here, and this is what we want to do."



U.S. SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Fourth Circuit Swears in First Openly Lesbian Lawyer

Lawyer and former general counsel for the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Nicole Berner, has made history as the first openly gay person to serve on the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals. With experience in cases surrounding LGBTQ+ rights, health care, safety and beyond, Berner will oversee federal cases in Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia. Her inclusion also makes her one of three queer women to serve as a federal appellate judge and the 11th queer judge to be appointed during President Biden's administration. Maya Wiley, the president of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, said of Berner's confirmation: "Her confirmation adds crucial lived experience to the court and sends a powerful signal to young LGBTQ+ lawyers, law students and other potential future judges that they belong on the federal bench."

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Apr. 10	San Francisco - In Person
Apr. 25	Chicago 1 - In Person
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May 8	Boston - In Person
May 17	LAW ENFORCEMENT & VETERANS VIRTUAL CAREER FAIR
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July 25	Seattle 2 - In Person
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Aug. 21	Portland 2 - In Person
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The Yurok Tribe & Save the Redwoods League Repatriate Native Land

The Yurok Tribe, the nonprofit Save the Redwoods League, the National Park Service and California State Parks have signed a landmark memorandum of understanding—a historic first step toward transferring ‘O Rew, a 125-acre ecologically and culturally important property, from Save the Redwoods League back to its original steward, the Yurok Tribe. The agreement also established the four partners’ shared vision for long-term co-management of the site, making the Yurok Tribe the first Native American Tribe to co-manage land within a National Park. The partners envision building a new visitor and cultural center and trails at ‘O Rew that will highlight the distinct histories and cultures of local Tribes.

“On behalf of the Yurok people, I want to sincerely thank Save the Redwoods League for committing to repatriate this critical part of our homeland. Together, we are creating a new conservation model that recognizes the value of Tribal land management,” said Joseph L. James, the chairman of the Yurok Tribe. “We are also appreciative of Redwood National and State Parks’

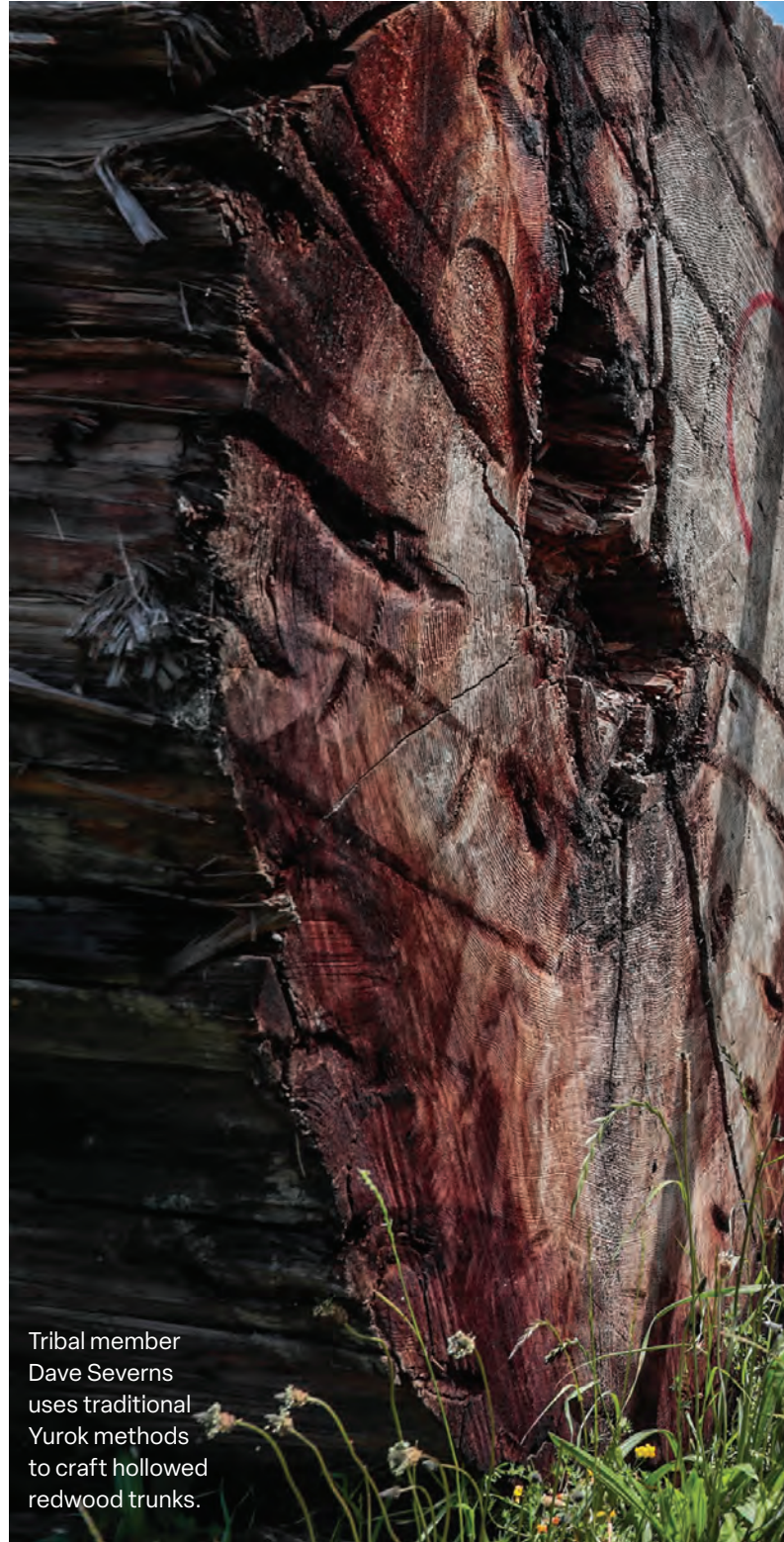
participation in this truly one-of-a-kind partnership.”

The vision codified in the agreement is for Save the Redwoods League to convey ‘O Rew to the Yurok Tribe in 2026 after the Redwoods Gateway and Prairie Creek Restoration project, currently in progress, is completed. Conveniently located off U.S. Highway 101 at the base of Bald Hills Road in Orick, California, the site will become a southern gateway to Redwood National and State Parks. The ‘O Rew Redwoods Gateway will be the first co-management model whereby the National Park Service and California State Parks will support visitation and stewardship on land owned by a Tribe.

“Today we acknowledge and celebrate the opportunity to return Indigenous guardianship to ‘O Rew and reimagine how millions of visitors from around the world experience the redwoods,” said Sam Hodder, president and CEO of Save the Redwoods League. “Today’s agreement starts the process of changing the narrative about how, by whom and for whom we steward natural lands. There’s a lot of



(L-R) Sam Hodder, president and CEO of Save the Redwoods League; Victor Bjelajac, superintendent of California State Parks’ North Coast Redwoods District; Rosie Clayburn, Tribal heritage preservation officer of the Yurok Tribe; Joseph L. James, chairman of the Yurok Tribe; Phillip Williams, Yurok Tribal council member; Steve Mietz, superintendent of Redwood National and State Parks; and Jessica Carter, director of parks and public engagement of Save the Redwoods League.



Tribal member Dave Severns uses traditional Yurok methods to craft hollowed redwood trunks.

EVAN-MARIE PETIT

important work to be done in the coming years to realize our shared vision. But the League and our partners are fully committed, and we're honored to collaborate with the Yurok Tribe, the National Park

Service and California State Parks to create a new model of shared environmental and recreational stewardship.”

Along with new recreational opportunities, such as new trails

and exhibits, the Yurok Tribe aims to construct a visitor center highlighting the distinct history and living culture of the Tribe and the extraordinary natural, cultural and recreational resources of the parks.



ROBERT GAUTHIER/LOS ANGELES TIMES VIA GETTY IMAGES



The Yurok Tribe offers Redwood Yurok canoe tours on the Klamath River. Tour guides Sammy Gensaw (L) and Zechariah Gabel launch for a tour.

The Yurok Tribe also plans to build a traditional village on-site, including plank houses and a sweat house.

“This is a first-of-its-kind arrangement, where Tribal land is co-stewarded with a national park as its gateway to millions of visitors. This action will deepen the relationship between Tribes and the National Park Service,” said Redwoods National Park Superintendent Steve Mietz. “The restoration efforts completed by the partners on this site link the large-scale watershed restoration upstream by the Redwoods Rising collaborative with downstream landowner-led efforts to restore the Redwood Creek Estuary, healing the land while healing the relationships among all the people who inhabit this magnificent forest.”

“This agreement further strengthens California State Parks’ relationship with the Yurok Tribe, and we welcome the opportunity to forge additional actions that support Indigenous land management with state, federal and nonprofit resources,” said Armando Quintero, director of California State Parks. “This historic agreement provides a pathway for the addition of Indigenous lands to the suite of values employed in co-managing and protecting Redwood National and State Parks lands for the enjoyment of public and Indigenous peoples in the region.”

ROBERT GAUTHIER/LOS ANGELES TIMES VIA GETTY IMAGES

The Military Will Now Cover IVF Services for LGBTQ+ Veterans

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) will finally be helping families expand. In an announcement by the VA, the organization will now be providing in vitro fertilization (IVF) services to eligible unmarried veterans and veterans in same-sex marriages. This will rewrite current laws that exclusively allow the VA to provide IVF services to couples who could produce their own gametes (eggs and sperm) within their relationship and to couples who couldn't reproduce due to military service-related health conditions.

This expansion of care allows for single veterans, veterans in queer relationships or service members who have non-service-related fertility issues the resources to start a family. It will also enable donor eggs, sperm and embryos to be used for the first time in the VA's history.

"Raising a family is a wonderful thing, and I'm proud that [the] VA will soon help more veterans have that opportunity," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Denis McDonough in a statement. "This expansion of care has long been a priority for us, and we are working urgently to make sure that eligible unmarried



COURTNEY HALE VIA GETTY IMAGES

veterans, veterans in same-sex marriages and veterans who need donors will have access to IVF in every part of the country as soon as possible."

The groundbreaking legislation

is part of the Department's efforts to support veterans wanting to grow their families. In the last several years, the VA has expanded its resources and care options to include maternity care up to 12 months postpartum, gynecology care, menopause resources, cervical cancer screenings, contraceptives, treatment for fertility conditions and fertility evaluations. These resources and the new IVF allowances will be available to all veterans currently enrolled in VA health care.

Additionally, the new legislature will eliminate opportunities for discrimination against same-sex couples, those identifying outside of the gender binary and those with differing health diagnoses, further fulfilling equal opportunities amongst military families. This is especially crucial as the military is working to pay reparations to service members impacted by the former "don't ask, don't tell" legislation and to supplement the 80%

increase in military pregnancies since 2014.

This provision of IVF services was praised by veterans, service members, activists and members of Congress alike. Sonia Osorio, the executive director of the National Organization for Women in New York City, stated that she is, "grateful to the Defense Department and overjoyed for the service members who, through this policy change, will now be able to access the reproductive health care so desperately needed in order to build their families."

Senator Patty Murray additionally took to social media to congratulate soon-to-be veteran families, saying:

"Service members and veterans have sacrificed so much, but they should never have to sacrifice their ability to start a family...this announcement is an important step to help veterans start and grow their families."



U.S. ARMY/SGT ZACHERY PERKINS

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Denis McDonough, speaks at the National Veterans Day Observance to commemorate the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier centennial at Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia, on Nov. 11, 2021.

Employment Rates for Workers with Disabilities Skyrocket

By Fawzia Reza

Although there has been greater awareness of inclusive practices within many organizations, a significant employment gap persists between individuals with a disability and their non-disabled colleagues. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the situation improved, and the hiring of employees with a disability increased because social distancing and telework options allowed more flexibility and remote work entailed fewer transportation challenges. It is encouraging that the upward trend in this area has continued.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the number of people with a disability who are employed has reached the highest level since tracking began in 2008. For example, in 2023, employment rates for disabled females and males reached an unprecedented high. This was especially notable

many executives who are now much more receptive toward hiring and accommodating employees with disabilities. For example, the Kessler Foundation, in partnership with the University of New Hampshire Institute on Disability, surveyed the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on supervisor perspectives in 2022 and compared the results to those from a similar survey in 2017. There were consistent gains in metrics related to disability-related employment practices.

Notwithstanding, research demonstrates that disabled candidates still experience significant challenges in being accepted for a position compared to those without a disability. In some cases, the unemployment rate of disabled candidates is twice as high as comparably qualified candidates who do not have a disability, which leads to economic instability and financial crisis for this demographic. Some



MOMO PRODUCTIONS/GETTY IMAGES

victim \$1.675 million.

While some disabilities are visible and cannot be hidden, employees with invisible disabilities such as depression or anxiety prefer not to share their disabilities with their employees due to fear of retaliation or being stereotyped. Some employees share their conditions with their supervisors, hoping to be understood and respected, but are often disappointed with the outcome. For example, in 2019, a general manager who worked at Holiday Inn Express & Suites told his supervisor that he needed time off to take care of his depression. After being discharged from the hospital, he was told that he had been fired because “the company was afraid he might hurt other people.” As a settlement in the ensuing disability discrimination lawsuit, the hotel chain paid \$100,000 to resolve the charges.

Even when employers hire people with visible disabilities, they are rarely hired or promoted for white-collar jobs such as consultants, managers or programmers. An article in the Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations states that blue-collar employment is more common among people with disabilities (43%) than people without disabilities (37%). Denying opportunities to an entire segment of the population robs organiza-

tions of developing and promoting innovative concepts driven by the perspective of someone differently abled. The Harvard Business Review recently featured Chieko Asakawa, a blind computer scientist, who created a smartphone app that sends vibrations or whispers on how to reach a destination. If organizations are not willing to take active steps to address their biases, they will do a disservice to individuals with disabilities and, at the same time, negatively affect their own reputation and innovation.

There are some steps that organizations might take to ensure fair hiring and retention practices, including regular training for all employees. Implementing inclusive practices should not be a one-time initiative, but an evolving process and regular workshops can create more opportunities to self-correct. Leaders must check their biases and encourage all stakeholders to follow their lead. The Implicit Association Test from Harvard University, commonly known as IAT, allows us to understand how our perceptions originate and how they may affect those around us. In particular, organizations must encourage (and even require) all employees to take the Disability IAT test and then take concrete steps to address identified biases.

Denying opportunities to an entire segment of the population robs organizations of developing and promoting innovative concepts driven by the perspective of someone differently abled.

for women with a disability, which has significantly narrowed the gender gap in employment between disabled men and women. As a corollary, the overall unemployment rates for disabled workers also fell to a record low. However, it is not known whether this effect has occurred because more people with some type of disability are entering the workforce, a higher number of candidates are identifying their disability or if more have recently become disabled.

While some leaders are skeptical regarding hiring people with disabilities, overall, there has been a positive shift in the mindset of

reasons for the lack of employment opportunities include discrimination, stereotypes and prejudice.

Discrimination against people with disabilities often creates roadblocks for them and further exacerbates the employment gap. These practices are more prevalent when the individual is from a diverse ethnic background. Discriminatory practices can carry a significant financial penalty for the organization. For example, in February 2024, McLane Northeast, a distribution company, refused to interview someone after they learned they were deaf, denying the candidate a fair chance to get the job. The jury awarded the

How Sharks and Drag are Bringing the Queer Community Together

By Natalie Rodgers

Picture this: A group of citizen scientists board a ship in Florida. They're going out to tag sharks, hoping their research will lead to discoveries and greater conversations around marine animals, ecological well-being and conservation policy. As they spend the day learning the ins and outs of shark tagging, they begin forming connections and long-lasting friendships with the other people on board. These friends then gather on the ship's deck after a long day out on the water to watch as one of the crew's scientists performs a drag show. Yes, you heard that right: A drag show.

This is where Miss Toto steps in.

Created and hosted by marine scientist and drag queen Miss Toto, along with co-creator Jake Jerome, the fourth annual "Drag 'n Tag" event features both shark tagging—a critical way in which the ocean and its inhabitants are studied—as well as an on-ship drag queen performance in the middle of the ocean.



But this event is so much more than simply about shark tagging or drag performances; it's about providing

a safe community to LGBTQ+ youth while also encouraging them in the world of STEM.

The Beginning

In 2015, Miss Toto was accustomed to being one of the few Black and queer people in her spaces. In the classroom, she was earning her master's degree in marine affairs and policy—a field that was predominately filled with straight white men—and in her spare time, pursuing bodybuilding with a similar demographic. Despite being the minority inside as well as outside of the classroom, she decided that it was more important to be present than to exclude herself.

"Marine science is predominately made up of white cisgender men," Miss Toto told *DiversityComm Magazine*. "At first, I found myself wondering if I would find camaraderie or if I could really pursue this degree, but then I was like 'No, I can do this. I'm going to figure this out, I'll be there and I'll be visible.'"

As she neared the end of her program, Miss Toto found another passion in drag. She not only began to receive notoriety for her performances, but connected with those who had a similar background. "I found myself making a really solid friend group with other queer people and not just from athletics or from my degree," she said.

As she continued to perform in drag and pursue her marine sciences career simultaneously, the community she came to love and the career path she wanted to pursue planted an idea in her mind—what if the two worlds could come together?

Drag 'n Tag is Born

While working with the Field School, an educational facility dedicated to hands-on marine biology research, Miss Toto was inspired to bring queer visibility to the STEM field. She wanted to create a space that not only furthered STEM research, but created a welcoming space for the LGBTQ+ community.



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Having an interest in sharks and their contribution to science, Miss Toto and one of her colleagues began toying with the idea of a shark tagging and drag show event. The shark tagging would be a great opportunity to further marine research—bringing in people who were interested in the sciences—while the drag show portion would garner the attention of the LGBTQ+ community. “We talked about it for years and then one day, we had the school’s support and we figured, why don’t we just do it?” Miss Toto said.

The first Drag ‘n Tag took place in 2021 and featured numerous options to join the day of fun. Participants who wanted to fully embrace the shark tagging could be taught how to take measurements and samples in a hands-on experience, while other options existed for people to simply observe the process or only participate in the sunset cruise drag show. As Miss Toto and the Field School hoped, the event not only garnered popularity among Florida’s queer community, but also created a more inclusive scientific experience.

“There are so many people who could be interested in STEM, but are discouraged because of the lack of representation,” Miss Toto stated. “Events like Drag ‘n Tag help queer people find communities outside of nightlife or going to bars and introduces the sciences in a unique way.”

More Than Science & a Show

While the expedition is entertaining, encourages diversity in the STEM field and a chance for professional networking, one of its most important missions is to help Florida’s LGBTQ+ population find their community.

To that end, Drag ‘n Tag donates all of its proceeds to Pridelines (pridelines.org), a nonprofit dedicated to the visibility and well-being of queer youth in Florida—currently one of the more difficult places in the country for LGBTQ+ individuals to receive support.

“From day one, Drag ‘n Tag has always been about the queer community,” Miss Toto emphasized.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CLIFF HAWKINS

“We wanted to provide a space for queer youth to connect and raise money in areas that aren’t always the most supportive of the LGBTQ+ communities.”

What’s to Come

Although Drag ‘n Tag only takes

place in Florida, Miss Toto is hopeful that this will soon change, as she has plans to expand the program to other states across the country. In the meantime, Miss Toto is currently working on programming for Chicago’s upcoming Shark Week, continuing to pursue her career as a

drag queen and planning the details for Drag ‘n Tag’s fifth annual event.

For those interested in attending, you can visit fieldschoolfoundation.org/dragntag.html for more information or to donate to Pridelines—an opportunity that is available on the website all year long.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CLIFF HAWKINS

It's Time to Take Another Look at Great Minds in STEM

The Board of Directors of Great Minds in STEM (GMiS), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, is re-launching the organization. In March 2024, the Board approved new vision and mission statements to clarify our presence at the forefront of implementing innovative programs and partnerships fostering and sustaining excellence in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine/health (STEMM) students and professionals, especially those from underserved communities.

Our Vision: We seek to achieve a workforce of STEMM professionals that is fully reflective of the rich diversity of the nation.

Our Mission: To inspire, support and recognize students and professionals, especially those from underserved communities, in order to create a talent pool of STEMM leaders dedicated to serving the nation.

We currently pursue our mission in support of our ultimate vision by:

- Inspiring STEMM excellence in pre-college students and their parents/caregivers.
- Providing financial and social support to excellent undergraduate and graduate students in STEMM fields.
- Recognizing excellence in STEMM professionals at all levels.

We will expand our efforts by recognizing organizational excellence among:

- Academic institutions that have made substantial progress in narrowing the retention and graduation gaps between underserved and majority students.



Middle school students construct a device during a GMiS Viva Technology event.

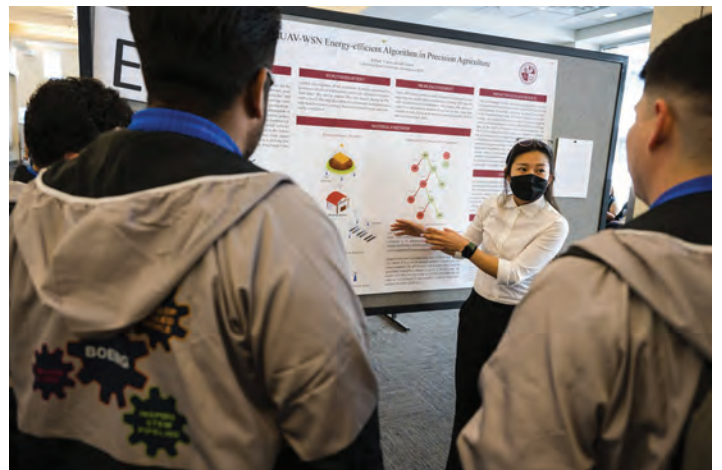
- Employers that have made substantial progress in hiring underserved populations from their local availability pools.

We are vigorously seeking and supporting partner organizations in order to enhance our reach and impact.

It's time to take another look at Great Minds in STEM. We truly are committed to identifying, nurturing and advancing great minds in STEMM wherever they are to be found. Visit us at greatmindsinstem.org.



College students talk to a recruiter at the GMiS Career and Graduate School Fair.



A graduate student presents her poster at the GMiS Graduate Poster Competition.

Explore a Finance Career: Opportunities & Insights

Every company in every industry has to deal with money. From payroll and budgets to taxes and savings, overseeing expenses can be challenging. But for those equipped to do the job, there is a promise of career opportunity, job stability and a steady income of your own. So, if you have a knack for mathematics and a desire to join a career field that has your back, here are some of the top careers in finance that you should consider:

Financial Advisor

Financial advisors are responsible for overseeing the monetary needs and expenses of an individual or business. Personal advisors often are self-employed and help their clients manage their investments, finance their homes, plan their retirement and more. Business advisors perform similar work, but focus more on the profitability of company projects, company-wide retirement plans and the like. These individuals usually hold a bachelor's degree in financial-, mathematic- or business-related fields and continually keep up-to-date on the latest economic trends.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that financial advisors will see a 13% increase in jobs by 2032 and currently hold an average salary of over \$92,000 per year.

Actuary

These financial experts use statistics, mathematics and financial theory to develop the best, low-risk policies for companies. Heavily relying on industry expertise and mathematical calculations, actuaries are responsible for designing and testing insurance policies and calculating the cost and savings plan needed in case of emergency workplace incidents. Most actuaries work for insurance companies, but are given the opportunity to work with clients across industries and locations.



To become an actuary, you need to at least obtain your bachelor's degree in a mathematical or analytical field such as statistics. Actuaries have a predicted growth rate of 23%—far outweighing the 3% average rate of other careers—and currently make over \$113,000 annually.

Financial Analyst

Dealing primarily in investments, financial analysts guide companies and individuals on the best ways to utilize their current and future investments to expand their profit. They keep up-to-date on the stock market, watch economic trends and usually fall into one of two specialties. Buy-side analysts are responsible for developing investment strategies for companies that have a lot of money to invest. These companies, called institutional investors, include hedge funds, insurance companies, independent money managers, nonprofit organizations with large endowments, private equity firms and pension funds. Sell-

side analysts advise financial service sales agents who sell stocks, bonds and other investments.

Financial analysts need a bachelor's degree in business to pursue their career. They have a predicted job growth of 8% and average an annual salary of over \$96,000.

Insurance Underwriter

If you want to work in finance, but don't necessarily want to crunch numbers as your primary job task, you may want to become an insurance underwriter. They are responsible for reviewing insurance applications and determining if they should be approved. Insurance underwriters need to have a thorough understanding in finance, technology and insurance policies, and often work with other businesses and personnel.

Typically, a bachelor's degree is preferred to become an insurance underwriter, but many have qualified solely on their past experience working in insurance. Currently, the field is experiencing

a slight decrease in growth at -2%. However, this career remains a great option to consider as you continue gaining field experience. Insurance underwriters see an average yearly salary of over \$76,000.

Accountant

Accountants are the go-to source for everything budget and finance. Working with both individuals and businesses, accountants are responsible for overseeing financial data, identifying risks within that data and advising their clients on how to best maximize their earnings. Accountants can aid in creating budgets, complete tax-related paperwork, maintain financial records and provide their expertise in financial changes. They need to obtain their bachelor's degree in accounting to enter the field and it is advised that accountants earn their Certified Public Accountant (CPA) license. These jobs are seeing a steady increase at 4%, with those in the field making about \$78,000 per year.



WANT TO CHANGE THE WORLD? JOIN A NATIONAL LABORATORY



Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and Idaho National Laboratory, both part of the U.S. Department of Energy, promote a vibrant culture of inclusive diversity that fuels growth and drives innovation. Through strategic collaboration, employees apply skills that significantly contribute to solving the nation's most critical safety and security challenges. Our employees utilize world-class science and technology to push the limits of creativity in ways no other entity can.

The Heroes That Changed the LGBTQ+ Workplace

Discrimination has always been an issue for the LGBTQ+ community, especially in the workplace. While there are several legal protections in place today to limit unjust termination or treatment of an employee for their gender identity or sexual orientation, none of this would have been possible without these past activists who took a stand. Here are three of the heroes that changed work standards for LGBTQ+ people in the United States:

Bayard Rustin

Recently the subject of the Oscar-nominated film, *Rustin*, Bayard Rustin was an openly gay activist for labor, human and civil rights. As a gay man, Rustin was often criticized for his sexual orientation, especially among labor circles, but did everything he could to advocate for unions for all. In the 1950s and 60s, Rustin was largely responsible for developing unions for Black Americans in the workforce—something that was formerly only given to white workers. He became the head of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations’ A. Philip Randolph

Institution, which furthered the implementation of these ideals, and was a key organizer of the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in 1963. In addition, Rustin dedicated his life to equal rights for Black Americans. He organized the Freedom Rides, worked closely with Martin Luther King Jr. and would later become an outspoken advocate for gay rights in the 1980s.

Harvey Milk

Harvey Milk was one of the first openly gay Americans elected to public office. Milk proudly advocated for gay rights in every area of life, specifically fighting against initiatives that discriminated against the LGBTQ+ community in any capacity. As a small business owner himself, Milk became active in San Francisco’s gay rights movement, and encouraged gay rights groups to coordinate with labor activists. Working together, they defeated the discriminatory Proposition 6, which would have banned people who were gay or lesbian from working in public schools, and successfully boycotted anti-union and anti-gay practices that were held by major corporations. Less than a year after



BETTMAN VIA GETTY IMAGES

Harvey Milk

being elected as San Francisco’s city supervisor, Milk was assassinated by Dan White, a disgruntled former city supervisor who cast the sole vote against Milk’s bill banning discrimination in public accommodations, housing and employment on the basis of sexual orientation. To this day, Milk remains one of the greatest labor (and otherwise) activists of the LGBTQ+ community.

Frank Kameny

Frank Kameny wasn’t the first American to be fired for being gay—but he was the first to fight all the way to the Supreme Court. Kameny was a WWII veteran and an astronomer for the U.S. Army Map Service in the 1950s, but despite the importance of his skills during the Space Race, he was barred from federal employment due to his sexuality. Kameny fought the decision, and when the Supreme Court denied his petition, he continued to fight discrimination in the federal government. Though unsuccessful, the case would go down in history as the first known civil rights claim based on sexual orientation. Kameny went on to continue his advocacy for the LGBTQ+ community, co-founding the first gay rights organization in Washington, D.C. He was also responsible for organizing one of

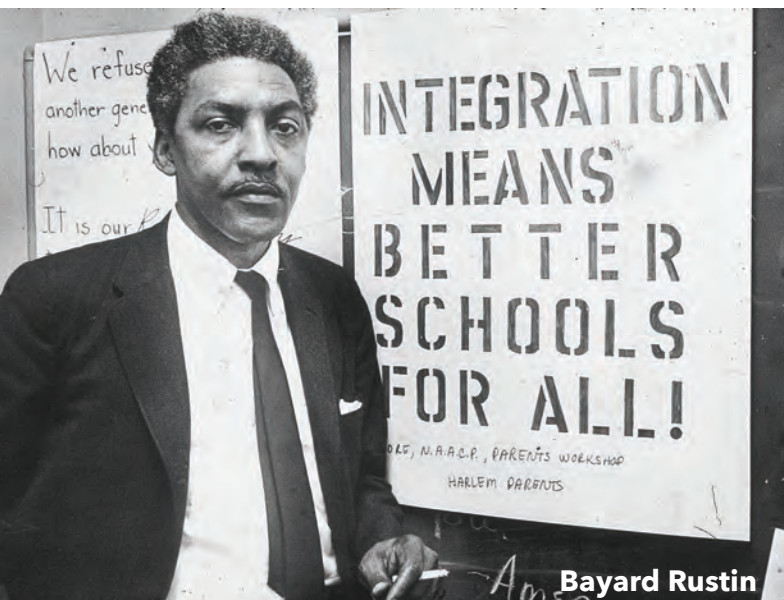


JAHU CHIKVENDI/UTHE WASHINGTON POST VIA GETTY IMAGES

Frank Kameny

America’s first gay rights protests, picketing the White House in 1965 and helping file lawsuits for other federal workers who were fired for their sexual orientation. These suits eventually led to rulings that forced the government to change its hiring policies. Kameny’s advocacy and dedication improved working conditions for generations of LGBTQ+ workers around the nation.

Sources: Department of Labor, Wikipedia



PATRICK A. BURNS/NEW YORK TIMES CO. GETTY IMAGES

Bayard Rustin

Powered by diversity and inclusion.

At Merck we foster a culture of inclusion and belonging where all employees feel welcomed and valued.

Bringing together people from different backgrounds allows us to deliver on our purpose to use the power of leading-edge science to save and improve lives around the world.

Diversity is in our DNA.



Optimizing Your Resume for ATS: Career Success Strategies

By Natalie Rodgers



You may be able to impress a hiring manager with your resume, but can you pass the ATS test? Over the last several years, many companies have begun using applicant tracking system (ATS) software to review resumes before they are given to an actual human. This software is designed to weed out the resumes with irrelevant experience and pass along the ones deemed applicable by a pre-determined system. Unfortunately, technology isn't perfect and can discard your resume even if you're an excellent fit for the position.

While there isn't a foolproof way to ensure that your resume never gets discarded, there are things you can do to eliminate the chances of this happening. Here are some tweaks you can give your resume in order to pass the ATS test:

Apply for Qualified Positions

It can be tempting to apply for any and every job, even the

ones you're not qualified for. Unfortunately, if your resume shows that you are underqualified or overqualified for a position, it could be weeded out before an employer ever sees it. Make sure the resume you are submitting reflects not only the job qualifications but your experience. This doesn't mean that you can only apply for jobs you've had experience in or that you have to match every detail of the job description perfectly, but you should stay in the realm of your experiences for the best chance to pass ATS and human reviewers alike.

You'll want to limit yourself to applying for several positions at one company. If a company you're interested in is offering two positions you're qualified for, then apply to both. Still, if you apply for multiple jobs with different qualifying factors, your resume may not pass ATS testing.

Use Keywords

In tandem with qualifications,

you'll want to use keywords in your resume that heighten your chances of passing ATS software. One of the easiest ways to do this is to review the job posting and include the listed hard skills in your resume. For example, if they're looking for a candidate who is proficient in Microsoft Office and has experience with WordPress, you'll want to state those two skills in your resume explicitly. You may even want to consider rewording your current resume to fit the exact terminology of the job posting, as some ATS software looks for resumes with that specific wording.

Keywords can also include specific licensing and certifications, full spellings of abbreviated terms (spelling out Bachelor of the Arts rather than stating BA), and even the job title of the position you're applying for. These keywords should additionally be used in the correct context instead of being randomly thrown into your resume.

Format Your Resume Correctly

Make sure you're submitting your resume using the specific format requested by the employer. Even with the correct terminology, sometimes resumes are defeated by confusing formatting. If there isn't a particular format given, the safest option is to submit your resume as a Word document (.docx), as that format is most accurately processed by ATS software.

You'll also want to keep the design of your resume simple. Design aspects often misread by ATS systems include graphics, text boxes, tables, columns, hyperlinks and headers and footers. While adding fancy borders and formatting can make your resume visually impressive, the composition can come through incorrectly on other computers and during ATS processing. Consider formatting your resume as a chronological, combination or functional resume and eliminate visual effects.

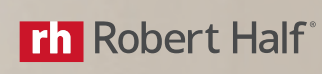
Sources: CareerOneStop, The Muse



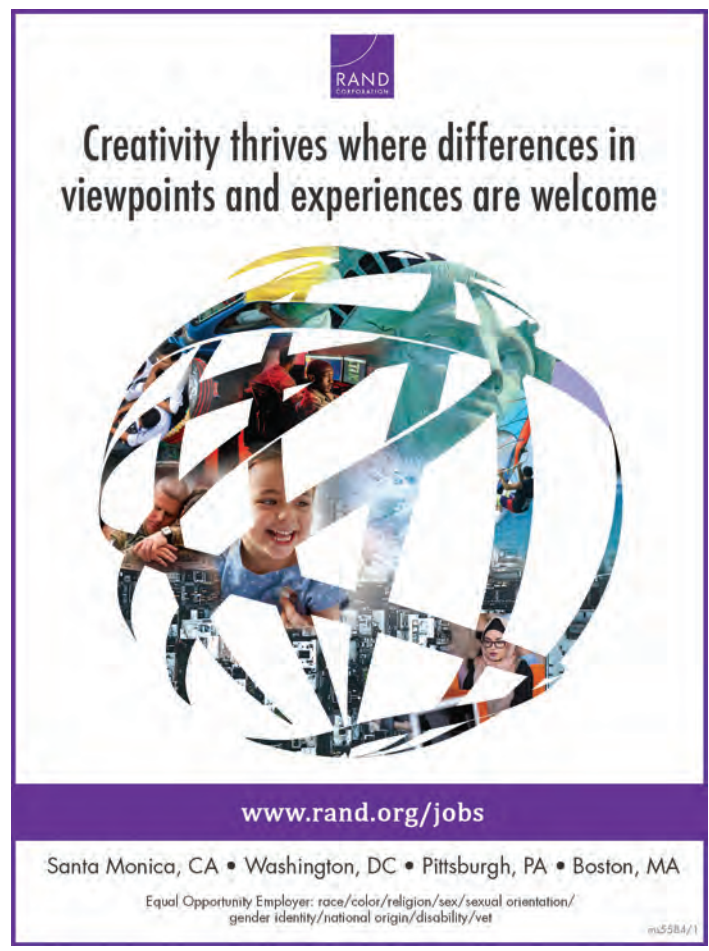
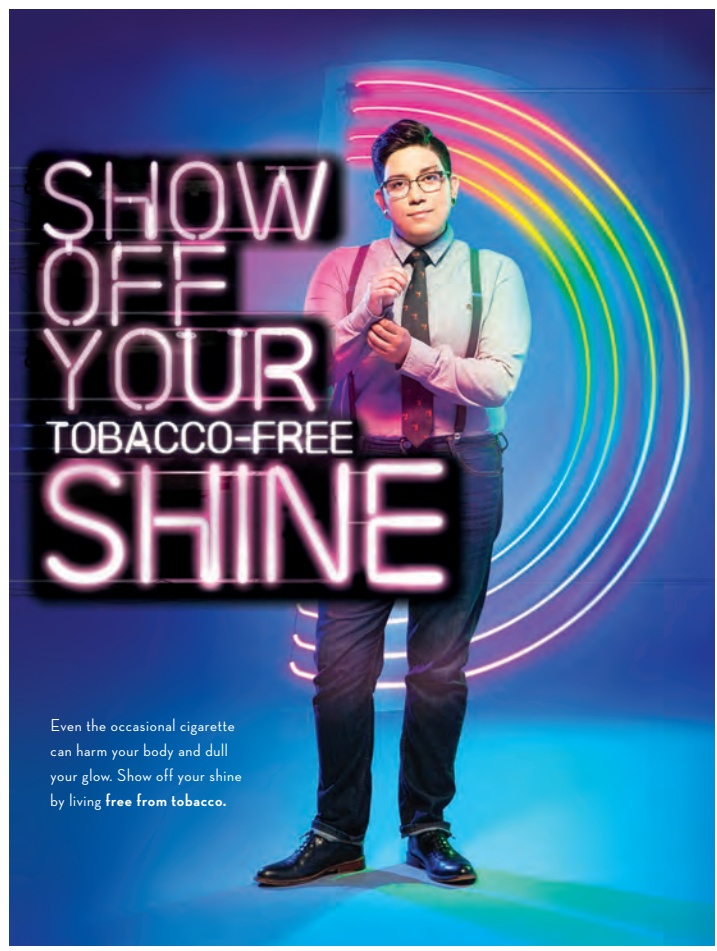
Supplier diversity is part of our inclusiveness

As a staffing and recruiting agency, we at Robert Half are committed to diversity on all levels. Our ongoing goal is to provide small- and diverse-owned businesses with equal footing to work with us while growing their own business at the same time.

Learn more about our supplier inclusion program at roberthalf.com/supplier-inclusion



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Data-Driven Inclusion: Creating LGBTQ+-Friendly Workspaces

LGBTQ+ workers have faced discrimination in the workplace for decades, even with companies making a more recent effort to create an inclusive workspace.

In a 2021 survey done by UCLA's Williams Institute, 46% of LGBTQ+-identifying employees reported that they had faced discrimination in the workplace at some point in their lives. Of this group, 67.5% were the recipient of negative comments, jokes and slurs by other employees; 20.8% experienced physical harm from workplace peers; and 25.9% had been sexually

harassed, with a large percentage of these same employees not given equal access in being hired, fired or promoted. These numbers only increased for queer workers of color and transgender employees.

said. "Through this report, we invite business leaders to engage more thoughtfully and intentionally with our communities."

From the data collected in this document, the HRC has identified six key elements that business operations can change for significant impact:

The Workforce

The Corporate Citizenship Report found that the best start to creating an inclusive workplace is through 'self-ID,' or the process of anonymously collecting data about employees. This process includes

company currently includes protections for LGBTQ+ rights and safety. By adapting your protocols to be inclusive of the needs of the queer community and upholding these values, you'll be increasing your chances of working with diverse suppliers while providing workplace safety to individuals who may not be receiving it otherwise. To best do this, consider consulting with organizations such as the Partnership for Global LGBTQ+ Equality. Your commitment may also aid in recruiting and partnering with LGBTQ+-owned small businesses through a supplier diversity partnership. Working with these small businesses is another great way to show and grow your allyship.

Products & Services

Without knowing it, the products and services you provide could be deterring LGBTQ+ customers from engaging with your company. For example, if you are selling a product that reinforces the gender binary—or marketing your products as "just for girls" or "just for boys"—this can lead gender non-conforming and non-binary individuals to not want to purchase that product.

Take the time to conduct research about your audience to see how you can best adhere to their needs. If you find that your consumer base is lacking in certain areas that could be unfavorable to the queer community, consult LGBTQ+ organizations, employees or individuals and make the necessary changes. It's also beneficial to undergo training and educational programs surrounding the LGBTQ+ community (both for yourself and your employees) to better understand how you can avoid offensive or undesirable tactics in the future.

Marketing

Before any new marketing is created, ensure there is input from LGBTQ+ employees and allies from

the very beginning of the process. This will limit your chances of unconsciously or accidentally using harmful material or ideas to promote your product. It's also important to include LGBTQ+ people, partners and representation in your advertising to reach more diverse audiences and to show that your company is an ally to the queer community.

Corporate Philanthropy

Pride month in June is the most popular time to show queer support, with companies making an extra effort to donate to nonprofits and organizations working to help LGBTQ+ communities. Unfortunately, many corporations will show this support during the month of June but at no other time during the year. To be truly inclusive, continue to work with and support queer-based organizations, businesses, scholarships, nonprofits and individuals year around. True allyship is ongoing and not just dedicated to a single month.

It's also important that your philanthropic endeavors are equally distributed and are going to organizations that actually help the LGBTQ+ community, so be sure to do your research.

Advocacy & Political Engagement

Outside of corporate philanthropy, the policies and organizations that your company supports should not be, in turn, supporting ideals and legislation that harm LGBTQ+ communities. Seek guidance from LGBTQ+ employees and groups on which policies and organizations to support and avoid, and make your advocacy for all LGBTQ+ individuals publicly known.

For a more detailed look into these six pillars, expanded data, workplace examples and more, visit the HRC website at [hrc.org](https://www.hrc.org).

For the first time in history, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) has released a report on the workplace using data, in-depth detail and real-world examples to advise companies on how they can best show up for their queer employees.

For the first time in history, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) has released a report on the workplace using data, in-depth detail and real-world examples to advise companies on how they can best show up for their queer employees.

Dubbed the HRC Foundation's Corporate Citizenship Report, the organization is hopeful this document will help strengthen diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) efforts in corporations and small businesses across the country.

"The future workforce is more out and allied than ever before in our nation's history, and the business community is looking for ways to further support LGBTQ+ workers, shareholders and consumers, from marketing to workplace policies to political engagement," HRC President Kelly Robinson

questions on how employees identify and what they would find helpful in creating a safer, more inclusive workplace. Self-IDs should be private; not requiring the survey-taker to give their name. Encourage your employees to answer these questions honestly to gather the best data on their needs and to give your company insight on what changes need to be made to foster inclusion.

The report additionally recommends that companies establish ERG groups to create a sense of community and acceptance in the workplace for new hires and current employees alike. This is a great way for companies to show allyship and to create camaraderie among LGBTQ+ workers.

Supply Chain

If you're working with supply chains, it's important to make sure that your company has an LGBTQ+-specific human rights commitment. Despite the existing protection of human rights across corporate supply chains, not every

Executive Presence, Reconsidered: LGBTQ+ Leadership

By John Voluturo

In my journey from the cubicle to the C-suite, one constant has been feeling like an outsider. Finding success can be bittersweet if you're from an underrepresented group. It can seem like the higher you climb, the less you "fit in." But what does that really mean? Why is it that LGBTQ+ leaders and executives feel like bringing their "full self" to work will harm rather than help them?

For many of my clients, and for me, the answer is tied up with this realization: our expectation of what an executive looks like, acts like and sounds like isn't always what we look like, act like or sound like. The image that often comes to mind is an older white man in a well-tailored suit. He sits behind a large wooden desk, surrounded by business books and a framed Ivy League diploma. When he speaks,

his voice is deep and authoritative, slow and confident. He takes up space. He waits for no one. He's tough and pragmatic but can always turn on the charm.

Of course, everyone is different. But this is the expectation, and it's often confirmed, piecemeal here and there, throughout our careers. To excel, I often wondered if I'd have to conform to those ideals. Sometimes, I did. I've worked with incredible executives who fit this mold, but that didn't mean I could see myself in their position. "Is it possible," I'd often wonder, "for me, a gay man, to be in that office and run a team?"

Yes, it is. But I had to learn that through experience. The truth is, LGBTQ+ professionals probably won't see themselves in the old professional development books about "executive presence." I sure didn't. But today, things are looking

a lot brighter. There are LGBTQ+ leaders blazing trails as role models for the generations now entering the workforce. What I and many others used to expect from the "executive" is changing, and we get to be a part of that change.

Though there's still much work to be done, the corporate world is beginning to understand that it can only benefit from more perspectives. Diverse teams mean diverse skills, ways of thinking and ways of communicating. We're starting to rethink executive presence, imagining an office that could be filled by anyone from any walk of life, who leverages their unique experience to become a great leader.

It's time to reconsider executive presence. The clothes and the diploma can change. Inclusivity also powers strong teams. Authenticity marshals its own kind of



COURTESY OF JOHN VOLUTURO

respectability. Redefining executive presence isn't merely about appearance—it opens up what's possible in the modern business world and who gets to be a part of it.

I've learned that finding success as an LGBTQ+ professional doesn't have to be bittersweet—it's the opportunity of a lifetime. Together, we can inch the professional world toward the wisdom and resilience of diversity, now and tomorrow.

You Belong Here

We're committed to promoting inclusion across our organization, and we'd love for you to join us.

Apply today at 53.com/careersDC



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Take Time to Celebrate Pride

It's no secret that the LGBTQ+ community has been one of the most oppressed groups in the history of the United States and beyond. While efforts in acceptance and education have massively improved within the last several decades, there is still much to be done for equality, protection and rights for members of the community. This Pride Month, make the effort to educate yourself and actively find ways to support the LGBTQ+ community.

Below is our starting guide to help you begin:

The History of Pride Month

June was chosen in honor of the 1969 anniversary of the Stonewall riots, a series of protests which many consider the turning point of the gay liberation movement and the fight for LGBTQ+ rights in the United States. The riots first began at the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in New York's Greenwich Village, on June 28th and lasted through July 3rd.

In 1970, on the one-year anniversary, Pride marches were held across U.S. cities as an act of awareness for the rights of LGBTQ+ communities and have continued in some form every year since. In June of 1999, former President Bill Clinton declared June as "Gay and Lesbian Pride Month," which was expanded to include the entire LGBTQ+ community by former President Barack Obama in 2011. June was chosen to honor the anniversary of the Stonewall riots, but it's also the month of several other key dates within the LGBTQ+ community.

These include:

- June 1st: LGBTQ+ Families Day
- June 12th: Pulse Remembrance Day
- June 15th: Anniversary of the Supreme Court Bostock ruling
- June 26th: Anniversary of the legalization of gay marriage in the United States

Pride Month is often celebrated through parades, marches, gatherings and workshops centered on recognizing, advocating for and educating others on the LGBTQ+ community and their needs.

Ways to Show Support

Whether you identify as LGBTQ+ or are an ally for the community, one of the best ways

that you can show your support this month is by donating to organizations that are actively working towards the rights and well-being of LGBTQ+ people. These nonprofits not only provide resources to those in the queer community, but are a great educational tool for families, friends and allies. Some credible organizations to consider include:

- The Trevor Project: Suicide prevention efforts and supportive programs for LGBTQ+ youth
- American Civil Liberties Union: Works in legislature and courtrooms for LGBTQ+ equality
- Lambda Legal: Legal representation for cases protecting the rights of the LGBTQ+ community



Participants in the annual LA Pride Parade in West Hollywood, California on June 9, 2019.



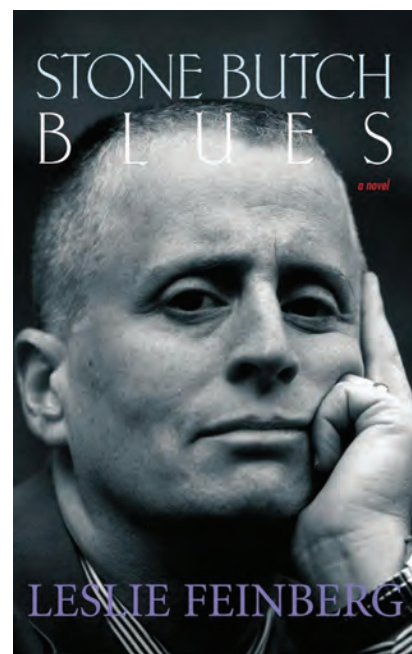
The Trevor Project at the 2023 LA Pride Parade on June 11, 2023 in Hollywood.

- OutRight Action International: Global protections for the LGBTQ+ community
- Point Foundation: LGBTQ+ scholarship fund
- NGLCC: Supports queer-owned businesses and business people
- GLAAD: Media coverage surrounding the LGBTQ+ community

Another great way to show support is to shop at queer-owned small businesses. An easy way to do this is to swap at least one purchase that you would usually make with a chain retailer with an LGBTQ+-owned business. Many of these companies can complete transactions online and specialize in everything from clothing, food and furniture to health care, event planning and home improvement.

Queer Media to Consider

Television, film and books are some of the best resources to better understand topics surrounding the LGBTQ+ community. These resources are even more impactful and prone to



The cast of *Heartstopper*.

accuracy when they are written, produced and star creatives that are LGBTQ+ themselves. Supporting queer creatives is also a great way to financially give back.

Some of the most popular media to consider this month include:

■ Documentaries and Biopics

- ✓ *Paris is Burning* (Documentary, 1990)
- ✓ *Pride* (Documentary series, 2021)
- ✓ *Disclosure* (Documentary, 2020)
- ✓ *Intersexion* (Documentary, 2012)
- ✓ *Milk* (Biopic, 2008)
- ✓ *Rustin* (Biopic, 2023)

■ Fictional Movies and Television Shows

- ✓ *Heartstopper* (Television series, 2022-Present)
- ✓ *Carol* (Historical drama, 2015)
- ✓ *But I'm a Cheerleader* (Comedy, 1999)
- ✓ *Schitt's Creek* (Television series, 2015-2020)
- ✓ *Pose* (Television series, 2018-2021)
- ✓ *Saving Face* (Rom-com, 2004)

■ Books

- ✓ *Stone Butch Blues* by Leslie Feinberg
- ✓ *Yes, You are Trans Enough* by Mia Violet
- ✓ *This is How You Lose the Time War* by Amal El-Mohtar and Max Gladstone
- ✓ *Tomboyland* by Melissa Faliveno
- ✓ *The Price of Salt* by Patricia Highsmith
- ✓ *Giovanni's Room* by James Baldwin

Bettaway Celebrates 40 Years

The family and woman-owned firm started as a small soda-bottling business, expanded into trucking, warehousing, and pallet delivery; today it operates one of the nation's largest pallet supply and management networks.

John Vaccaro remembers walking through his father's soda factory watching bottles of soda of all flavors being filled and capped on a rolling assembly line, and placed into crates. Then his father would load the finished product into a truck, and drive to local bodegas throughout Brooklyn, chatting up owners, asking about their families and their business, and building a market for his locally made soda pop.

As the industry evolved, eventually local soda bottlers and their neighborhood-branded soda products were displaced by large beverage companies. So, the senior Vaccaro, sensing the need to pivot, changed along with it. Major beverage companies needed local distribution. And in an early nod to outsourcing, those beverage makers didn't want the trucks themselves. They wanted a trusted partner to hire the drivers and operate trucks on their behalf, a partner for whom trucking and distribution was their core competency, who knew the area and knew the customers.

And with that Bettaway Beverage Distributors was born, with an initial fleet of one tractor trailer and two side-loader straight trucks doing beverage delivery. The focus was on beverage distribution, initially with Snapple as its first customer, serving the New York boroughs. That was 1983. Several years later, adding other start-up beverage businesses like Arizona Iced Tea, the trucking operation was expanded into a third-party logistics provider, and a new division was created – Bettaway Traffic Systems.

In the early 1990s, to address the emerging need for supply, maintenance and management of pallets Bettaway Pallet Systems was formed.

Bettaway is celebrating four decades of service as a local, family and woman-owned New Jersey business. No longer is it just a distributor of beverages. Today, after some half-dozen reinventions and expansions, adding related businesses such as dedicated

warehousing and pallet supply, and jumping early into emerging market opportunities like packaging and fulfillment, Bettaway Supply Chain Services has become one of New Jersey's leading integrated logistics, trucking, supply chain and pallet supply management companies.

The firm supports a wide range of beverage and other businesses with logistics, warehousing, order fulfillment and custom packaging, and transportation services across the Northeast. As it continued its journey of diversification, it won the business – and the trust – of other major brands, including Monster Beverages, SOBE, Vitamin Water, and Body Armor, among others.

Later, other strategic partners came on board, including logistics industry titans such as C.H. Robinson, Coyote and Arrive; and PECO Pallets.

The company launched PalletTrader at the end of 2022, the industry's first neutral, independent online site where pallet buyers and sellers can post their needs and their inventories, negotiate a price, complete a transaction and arrange transportation – all through one familiar e-commerce like process.

John Vaccaro, the company's second-generation leader, along with his sisters Laura, June and Tracey, learned first-hand from their parents about anticipating customer needs and evolving with them – and how that would lead to growth and success. "Pallets is a good example," he notes. "In the early '90s there were no rental pallets and a poorly designed pallet exchange program. The market was ripe for innovation. So, we created a pallet retrieval and supply management program for beverage distributors. That expanded into providing all the pallets to the manufacturing facilities of our new age beverage customers.

"We've got a model and a philosophy that has worked for 40 years, and we're going to stick with it," Vaccaro says. "Create value for the customer through innovative solutions. Do what you say. Honor your commitments."

For more information, visit us at [Bettaway.com](https://www.bettaway.com)

bettaway

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF SERVICE

WE BELIEVE THE BEST WAY TO BUILD
A LONG-LASTING BUSINESS IS TO
BUILD LONG-LASTING RELATIONSHIPS.



c. 1983



c. 2023

For 40 years, and as a result of long-lasting strategic partnerships, Bettaway has delivered consistent, high-quality service to our customers.

Working together is how we inspire confidence and earn trust, resulting in a business built on so many long-standing relationships.

After four decades, it's the best way we know to build a business.

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NABA's Kimi Ellen Shares the Value of Diversity



COURTESY OF NABA

Since 1969, NABA Inc. (formerly the National Association of Black Accountants) has been working to represent and foster the next generation of Black professionals in the finance sector. In this month's finance focused special, we sat down with Kimi Ellen, the managing partner and government consulting specialist at Benford Brown & Associates; as well as the national director and audit committee chair at NABA; to discuss the importance of diversity in the finance industry and how it can aid in closing the racial wealth gap.

How did you initially decide to go into the accounting and finance industry?

As a young girl, I was exposed to the accounting industry by my

mom's client, who was working with what I now know as 16 column paper. I was always mathematically inclined and my eyes lit up at seeing all of the numbers. I asked her why there were so many numbers on the paper and she said that she was an accountant. I then exclaimed that I was going to be an accountant, too! She said to me, "don't be an accountant like me... be a CPA like my boss." I was only 9 or 10 years old and I said I was going to be a CPA. In high school, I was exposed to my first accounting class as an elective and after a few months, my teacher said that he hoped I was planning on pursuing accounting as a college major because he had never had a student that didn't get one wrong answer on his accounting exams.

What is one aspect of your job

that might surprise others?

To the outside world, they think that accounting is all numbers. The reality is that you have to have strong oral and written communication skills to ensure that you can explain financial information to non-financial people. The majority of the time is spent writing or speaking and not just data input of financial information.

What sets Benford Brown & Associates apart from other CPA firms?

What sets us apart from similar firms is that we are the largest, Black woman-owned firm in the United States. We bring a unique perspective and understanding of culturally diverse backgrounds. That perspective allows us to use our cultural competence to foster stronger relationships with clients with diverse backgrounds. We have a strong commitment to social responsibility and good corporate citizenship. We often plan and execute community service days multiple times a year. What probably sets us apart from a lot of firms is that we have developed a niche as a fiscal agent to nonprofits that receive large government contracts, but do not have the accounting infrastructure in place to handle such large sums of money.

What role would you say CPAs play in closing the racial wealth gap for minority-owned small businesses?

There are several roles that CPAs can play in closing the racial wealth gap for minority-owned small businesses. Most important is business strategy and business advisory services. Humans are naturally comfortable with people that

they perceive to be like them. As an advisor, we can offer guidance on various business matters, from operations and human resources to growth strategies. We often have a network of other professionals that can assist with needed services, such as access to capital. We can work with our clients to ensure that their financial statements represent the full picture of the work that they are providing to their customers. When their financial statements are accurate, it helps to provide lenders with better assurance that they are a viable business, eligible for a lending opportunity.

What has been the proudest moment or accomplishment in your career thus far?

My proudest moment was when my firm turned 25 years old and I took a look at all of the lives I've touched through all of the individuals that have worked for me. My proudest accomplishment is that I have mentored many of my staff and imparted financial wisdom to them, resulting in their being the first in their families to own property or have an actual retirement plan of action. Being able to help the individuals that give so much of their time and talents for my firm by providing them with advice on how to build generational wealth has made me very proud of the work I've done to grow my business, grow my people and service my clients.

Anything else you would like to add or share with us?

I would like to share that accounting is such a diverse career and I hope to inspire the next generation of mathematically-inclined students to pursue a career in accounting.

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To learn more and join our mission, visit the Supplier Diversity and Sustainability pages on mysupplymanagement.com.

A Conversation with

HSM'S BRAND ENGAGEMENT SENIOR DIRECTOR



PJ Barbour | Senior Director, HSM Brand Engagement

PJ Barbour brings over 15 years of hands-on experience in hospitality, FF&E and design to the forefront as a key asset for the HSM team. Known for his proactive approach and dedication to delivering results on intricate cross-functional projects, PJ, along with his team, plays a pivotal role in supporting services across all 23 brands. Currently, he spearheads the testing of in-room coffee programs and drives the implementation of textile initiatives, and colleagues are always eagerly anticipating the reveal of PJ's newest innovative strategies. Beyond his professional endeavors, PJ enjoys boating on the lake with his husband, Jason, and the couple's two furry companions.

How is your team contributing to supplier diversity?

Across our organization, our Brand Engagement team acts as a vital bridge for suppliers and brands alike. In our interactions with brand stakeholders and internal partners, we urge them to include diverse suppliers in all product reviews or RFI/RFP processes. We connect the dots on how supplier diversity can come to life on specific project workstreams.

Take, for instance, the recent launch of our new DoubleTree by Hilton cookie. To ensure all guests can enjoy this signature aspect of a DoubleTree by Hilton warm welcome, we sought a sweet offering that's gluten-free, non-GMO, vegan and Top Nine Allergen-free. We found the perfect match with Partake Foods, a minority- and woman-owned supplier. It's a tangible example of moving toward supplier diversity goals.

What advice would you give to diverse suppliers who want to partner with Hilton?

Exercise patience: Progress requires time! Frequently, the product initiatives my team and I are working on demand months, if not years, for thorough testing, evaluation and implementation. It's crucial for suppliers to comprehend the duration this process can consume when introducing a new program or product on a global level.

Hilton

SUPPLY MANAGEMENT

Thriving Queer-Owned Businesses: Benefits of Certification

Whether you're a longtime business owner or are just getting started, becoming a certified business can be a game-changer for your company's success. For the LGBTQ+ community, receiving certification from an organization like the National LGBT Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC) can provide access to opportunities, resources and funding that can help you thrive in your sector.

We sat down with Eric Jia-Sobota, the founder of EverGlade Consulting, an NGLCC-certified consulting firm, to learn more about his business and how certification has made an impact.

EverGlade Consulting is often described as "connecting public sector needs with private sector solutions." Can you share some ways your firm

achieves this?

EverGlade helps technology and life science organizations identify, win and manage federal funding. The government has traditionally been limited to companies that can navigate the complex world of government contracting. A technology company, as an example, usually lacks the infrastructure needed to be a contractor. By helping manage these requirements, we help increase the potential solutions the government can utilize to solve some of the most complex national security and public health challenges.

When did you first learn about NGLCC certification?

My husband and I had participated in local chamber events for a number of years, and after owning our own business, we decided that it would be worthwhile to go through

the certification process.

What are some of the key challenges facing LGBTQ+-owned businesses today?

I believe that the key challenges facing LGBT businesses are consistent with other small businesses. Financing is probably the biggest challenge. Our financial systems are set up to loan money to people who don't really need money, so small businesses are often left seeking non-traditional forms of financing, which is very expensive.

How has being NGLCC-certified positively impacted EverGlade Consulting?

I have met a number of small business owners by having the certification. When meeting someone new, they often will cite our certification as a reason they reached out.



COURTESY OF EVERGLADE CONSULTING

What advice would you give to a new LGBTQ+ entrepreneur?

Your success as a small business owner is not determined by your wins; it is determined by your failures and how you learn and adapt. I always tell people that learning how to fail successfully is key to your business's long-term prospects.



Business Diversity Leadership Summit

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Broadening Supplier Diversity Through Business Diversity

Join industry leaders and change-makers at the forefront of supplier diversity at the 2024 National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC) Business Diversity Leadership Summit (BDLS). BDLS features dynamic sessions to ensure supplier diversity professionals have access to the latest information, tools, and a community to grow Minority business enterprises (MBEs), advance economic equity, and help move their organizations from supplier diversity to business diversity.

Visit nmsdc.org to learn more and register.

At MassMutual, Pride's Impact is Year-Round

For Colin Burns, being his true, authentic self at work was relatively easy. He was a successful account executive at a storied Manhattan advertising agency – a creative environment in one of the country's most diverse cities. When a new marketing position in financial services took him to the heart of the Midwest, being open about his identity was no longer an afterthought. He was challenged by a significant shift in the mentality toward diverse individuals. "In financial services, your personal and professional lives merge much differently than in advertising. It was so much more siloed." For the first time in his professional career, he had to be thoughtful about how he shared who he loved. What was missing, he realized, was an environment where one could safely bring their whole, authentic self to work.



Kate Ciriello, Lead, Diversity Equity & Inclusion

Kate Ciriello has built a robust career in diversity, equity, and inclusion and human resources. She is also a stalwart ally of the LGBTQ+ community. "I had a favorite aunt who identified as a member of the LGBTQ+ community. It was never an issue in our family, but she was not fully comfortable being herself outside of it." As Kate got older, she began to see that acceptance for gay and lesbian people was not the norm, certainly not in the workplace. She saw firsthand the

fear that discrimination caused in her LGBTQ+ friends and neighbors and even among her children's friends at school. "My aunt never lived an open life. She couldn't be her complete self. I think of her every time I meet a married same-sex couple and wish she had had the same opportunities to openly express her love."



Irene Brank, Director of Learning, Quality & Performance

"I'm transgender." With those words, Irene Brank's life completely changed. Her daughter Samantha (then Samuel) had come to the realization that she was not a gay boy but was – happily – a trans girl. "My first reaction was, 'Can't you just be gay?'" After a flood of tears and emotions, Irene got busy. "When she came out as transgender, I had all the questions and all the fears of her being gay all over again, but on steroids. I had to act. I had to learn as much about my child's identity as possible. Sam has never *not* felt love, and we weren't about to stop loving her then." As a new ally and advocate for the trans community, one of Irene's biggest fears in the workplace was how to address her daughter's self-revelation.

For Colin, Kate, and Irene, MassMutual's Pride Business Resource Group (BRG) has been a safe space to share their individual stories as members, allies, and advocates of the LGBTQ+ community. "Pride was the first community where I felt comfort-

able telling my story. I was sure I was the only mother of a trans child at work. I was terrified at first. The Pride team embraced me!" Irene exclaims.

Pride, one of the oldest of the financial services company's eight BRGs established over a decade ago, drives awareness and action on critical LGBTQ+ topics for MassMutual, financial professionals affiliated with MassMutual, and the community. Not only does it strengthen a diverse, inclusive, and productive workplace, but it also provides valuable market insight for the products and services the company offers. "Our BRGs are key components of our diversity framework as a business," says Kate. "They function as so much more than affinity groups; they help advise on product development, diverse suppliers, marketing approach – even the way we train our associates on compliance issues. They're an invaluable resource for our business."

"It's remarkable what we've been able to accomplish," Irene says. "The Pride BRG consults with various business units on all sorts of matters. We help them accurately tell the story of the LGBTQ+ community as well as speak directly to queer customers in language that's appropriate. Providing the correct options for self-identifying pronouns and gender identity in company email signature templates is just one small example. We've been able to make these changes because people like me have shared our stories and brought their whole selves to work. What was once unfamiliar and maybe frightening is now known and not so scary."

Colin agrees. "Everyone here at



Colin Burns, Head of Retirement, Wealth & Investments Product Marketing

MassMutual believes in the value of diversity. We're all willing to do the hard work of creating an environment where you feel physically and psychologically safe. I am much more successful when I can invest my whole self into my work." Irene adds, "When you're hiding secrets about a loved one or about yourself, there's no way you can use your full intellect. Samantha's story impacts everything I do."

MassMutual's diversity journey began over 15 years ago. With full support from the C-suite, the company continues to make important strides. From supplier diversity to recruiting and retention to segment marketing, its BRGs help shape the business. Equally as important, they empower the company's employees to give their best. Colin concludes, "Pride's impact is remarkable. It inspires me to think differently and to face our challenges through a lens of diversity. Diverse thought creates solutions, and that leads to success."

**This article was provided and paid for by MassMutual.*



MassMutual BRG



Meet Heather Aaron—A Leader in LGBTQ+ Health Care



COURTESY OF WHITMAN-WALKER

Highly accomplished public health professional and executive Heather Aaron was recently named as CEO of Whitman-Walker Health System, a leader in LGBTQ+ health, research education and policy with special expertise in HIV care.

In her new role as its CEO, Aaron will oversee the Whitman-Walker Foundation, the Whitman-Walker Institute and Whitman-Walker Health System Real Property Holdings.

“We are thrilled to have Heather

join Whitman-Walker as CEO of our Health System; she brings an enormous breadth and depth of experience and expertise to our organization.” said Board Chair of Whitman-Walker Health System Ann Bonham. “Heather is the dynamic and collaborative leader that will help us to realize the vision and full-potential of our Health System...building revenue and growth opportunities that will further Whitman-Walker’s care, advocacy, education and research goals in partnership with Naseema Shafi, CEO

of Whitman-Walker Health.”

Aaron has spent her entire career in health care, making a difference for the communities where she has served as a health care executive and educator for more than 35 years. She has worked tirelessly to develop diversity, equity and inclusion in all her work.

She completed her undergraduate studies at Quinnipiac College, where she received a Baccalaureate of Science degree in health services administration and a Baccalaureate of Arts in psychology. Aaron later completed her graduate studies at Yale School of Medicine, Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, where she received her master’s in public health administration. In addition, she is a licensed nursing home administrator.

In Connecticut, Aaron operated the only continuum of care model which included a nursing home, independent living apartments and case management in one centralized community. The care model was specifically designed for people living with HIV and AIDS. Aaron’s efforts there significantly improved conditions for both residents and staff, including members of the LGBTQ+ community.

“Whitman-Walker has been answering the call for support for over 50 years, and as the Health System CEO, my main goal is to continue to strengthen our community ser-

vice,” said Aaron.

“At this key moment in time, I’m keenly aware of the challenges facing our communities, as well as the responsibility and opportunity for Whitman-Walker to sustain our mission. We will continue to align our research institute work to address community needs and work with our philanthropic partners as we strive to create better health outcomes for all. I look forward to leading the charge,” she concluded.

A transformative leader and a firm believer that every team member is important to the success of an organization regardless of title and position, Aaron’s character, passion for community, intellect, experience and calm confidence align perfectly with Whitman-Walker’s mantra of ‘we see you.’

For over 50 years, Whitman-Walker has been part of the fabric of the local Washington D.C. and national community as a first responder and care provider for those living with HIV; a leader in LGBTQ+ care and advocacy; and a research center working to discover breakthroughs in HIV treatment and prevention science. The company envisions a society where all people are seen for who they are, treated with dignity and respect and afforded equal opportunity for health and well-being.

Source: Whitman-Walker

“We will continue to align our research institute work to address community needs and work with our philanthropic partners as we strive to create better health outcomes for all. I look forward to leading the charge.” - Heather Aaron



Embracing Diversity and Inclusion: Accounting and Financial Women's Alliance (AFWA) Leads the Way

In today's rapidly evolving world, diversity and inclusion have become integral components of any successful organization. The Accounting and Financial Women's Alliance (AFWA) stands at the forefront of promoting diversity and inclusion within the accounting and financial industry. With each community now being represented, including women of color, LGBTQ+, military and those with disabilities, AFWA is committed to fostering an environment where everyone feels valued and empowered.

Chelsea Sowers, a valued member of AFWA's national board of directors and a proud member of the LGBTQ community, shares her transformative journey within the organization. Reflecting on her experiences, Chelsea underscores the profound impact of AFWA's inclusive ethos. She remarks, "Working in the fields of finance and accounting, I have often felt like I could not share or be open about my LGBTQ identity. I have experienced judgment from my more conservative peers. All this changed when I came to AFWA. Never have I felt more included in a group of my peers outside of the LGBTQ community."

At the helm of AFWA is a leadership team that reflects the organization's commitment to diversity. The current national president, for instance, is the spouse of an active-duty Naval officer, bringing a unique

perspective and understanding of the challenges faced by military families. Additionally, three of AFWA's national board members are women of color, further amplifying the organization's dedication to promoting diversity at all levels.

Membership in AFWA is open to all, regardless of gender, ethnicity, background or profession. This inclusivity extends beyond traditional boundaries, welcoming men who share AFWA's values and commitment to diversity and inclusion. By embracing diversity, AFWA not only enriches its membership but also fosters a more dynamic and innovative community that is better equipped to navigate the complexities of today's financial landscape.

One of the key initiatives spearheaded by AFWA is the promotion of diversity and inclusion through its various programs and events. From networking opportunities and professional development workshops to mentorship programs and leadership summits, AFWA provides a platform for individuals from all backgrounds to connect, learn and grow together.

As AFWA partners with the Accounting MOVE Project, it highlights its commitment to supporting women's advancement in accounting and finance. Firms that participate in MOVE receive confidential reports that take the data gleaned from in-house surveys and interviews to

highlight areas where the firm is making great strides toward inclusivity and pinpoints areas where improvements can be made by sharing proven best practices. MOVE also releases its annual Best CPA Firms for Women and Best CPA Firms for Equity Leadership lists to showcase the employers that are truly head and shoulders above the rest of the profession for women who want flexibility and opportunities to lead.

"Our goal is to create a supportive and inclusive community where everyone feels empowered to bring their authentic selves to the table," explains Sowers. "By embracing diversity in all its forms, we not only enrich our organization but also drive positive change within the accounting and financial industry as a whole."

Bonnie Buol Ruszczyk, Accounting MOVE Project's president, highlights the critical role AFWA plays in advancing diversity within the profession. She notes, "AFWA's support is vital to our work of helping the profession create inclusive cultures where women want to work and can succeed. AFWA is committed to exploring underlying tensions and promoting factors that support women's career aspirations. Working together, we aim to drive positive change and increase opportunities for women in the accounting profession."

Through its commitment to

diversity and inclusion, AFWA is not only breaking down barriers but also paving the way for a more equitable and inclusive future. By championing diversity in leadership, fostering an inclusive organizational culture and providing opportunities for professional growth and advancement, AFWA is leading by example and inspiring others to follow suit.

Chelsea's testimonial speaks volumes about AFWA's unwavering dedication to fostering a culture of acceptance and support. At the Women Who Count Conference, Chelsea bravely shared her story, confronting unconscious bias and the internal struggle to be true to oneself. Her courage was met with a resounding standing ovation from fellow AFWA members, exemplifying the organization's commitment to amplifying diverse voices and championing authenticity in professional settings.

In conclusion, the Accounting and Financial Women's Alliance is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion within the accounting and financial industry. With representation from various communities across the nation and a leadership team dedicated to driving positive change, AFWA is leading the way towards a more inclusive future for all.



Queen Latifah

—Shining & Empowering

By Sarah Mosqueda

We've had the prince of pop and the king of rock 'n' roll, but when it comes to hip-hop, there's only one queen.

At the 2024 NAACP Image Awards, host Queen Latifah was surprised by her *Living Single* co-star, Erika Alexander, when she wished the 54-year-old powerhouse a happy birthday with a royal blue cake.

"We would be remiss if we didn't celebrate you tonight, friend," said Alexander. "For the light that you shine, for the trails that you blazed, for the empowerment that you instill; happy birthday, Queen."

Hosting the 55th annual NAACP Image Awards is just one of the many things Latifah has been up to lately, and her former co-star's words couldn't ring truer for the American rapper, actress, producer, singer and ally who continues to shine and empower.

Taking a Beat

Latifah's career as a musician began in the late 1980s. Hailing from Newark, New Jersey, her given name is Dana Elaine Owens, but

she came up with the stage name Queen Latifah when she was just eight years old. She discovered the word "Latifah" and its meaning of "delicate" or "very kind" in a book of Arabic names.

At the age of 18, she started beatboxing with a group called Ladies Fresh and was also an original member of the Flavor Unit. Producer DJ King Gemini passed her demo along to MTV, and she was signed to Tommy Boy Records shortly after, who produced her first album, *All Hail the Queen*, in 1989. The debut reached the number six spot on the Billboard Top Hip-Hop/R&B Albums chart. She was just 19 years old.

All Hail the Queen, and particularly the track "Ladies First," would have a long-lasting cultural impact on women in hip-hop and beyond. In a recent appearance on the *Drew Barrymore Show*, Latifah recalled how she found her voice on that first record.

"You have to find your lane, and my lane, I decided, was to definitely make women feel empowered; make us feel empowered," said Latifah. "Why don't I pump us up? Ladies first, how about that?"



Performing onstage during the 65th GRAMMY Awards at Crypto.com Arena on Feb. 5, 2023 in Los Angeles.

EMMA MCINTYRE/GETTY IMAGES FOR THE RECORDING ACADEMY

“Ladies First” also opened doors for other women in the industry by featuring Monie Love, making it the first collaborative track by two female rappers not in a group. In 2008, the popular single placed at number 35 on *VHI’s* 100 Greatest Songs of Hip-Hop.

In 2023, *All Hail the Queen* was inducted into the Library of Congress’s National Recording Registry for its “cultural, historical or aesthetic importance in the nation’s recorded sound heritage.” The album not only proved rap had the ability to cross genres, but created more opportunities for women in hip-hop.

Latifah followed with her subsequent albums, *Nature of a Sista’* in 1991 and *Black Reign* in 1993, which included the GRAMMY Award-winning song “U.N.I.T.Y.” After she released her fourth hip-hop album, *Order in the Court*, in 1998, she transitioned into traditional singing and released *The Dana Owens Album*, full of soul and jazz standards.

Life in Rhythm

While she was making music, Latifah was also launching her acting career. In the early 90s, she had supporting roles in films like *House Party 2*, starring Kid ‘n Play and Spike Lee’s *Jungle Fever*. Latifah also had guest roles on hit television series like *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air* and *Hangin’ with Mr. Cooper*.

These minor roles led to her biggest yet—playing Khadijah James on FOX network’s *Living Single*. Latifah played the role of James from 1993 to 1998 and even wrote and produced the sitcom’s theme song.

Her movie roles continued, and she added box office hits like *Set It Off* and *The Bone Collector* to her filmography. In 2002, she combined her singing and acting talents in her role as Matron “Mama” Morton in *Chicago*. She received an Academy Award nomination for the role and joined a short list of other hip-hop and R&B artists with the distinction that includes Will Smith, Jennifer Hudson, Jamie Foxx and Mary J. Blige.

In 2007, Latifah added a new distinction to her repertoire: producer. She produced the film *The Perfect Holiday* and served as an executive producer for the third season of the *Scream* television series. In 2021, CBS rebooted the American crime drama *The Equalizer*, where Latifah serves as an executive producer and stars as the titular character. The show is now in its fourth season.

In a recent appearance on *The Tonight Show* with Jimmy Fallon, Latifah talked about the fight scenes she performs on *The Equalizer* and how she relates the skills to music. “Everything I do, music sort of informs it, so learning stunt choreography is like learning the beats of choreography; the rhythm of it,” she said.



AL PEREIRA/GETTY IMAGES/MICHAEL LOCHS ARCHIVES

Latifah and Monie Love perform “Ladies First” at Newark Symphony Hall in Newark, New Jersey in April of 1990.



PARAS GRIFFIN/GETTY IMAGES FOR BET

Queen Latifah and Erika Alexander speak onstage during the 55th NAACP Image Awards at Shrine Auditorium and Expo Hall on March 16, 2024 in Los Angeles.

IMEHA KPANDUJOSEN/GETTY IMAGES FOR JCPENNEY



At a JCPenney holiday event with the Boys & Girls Club at the Glendale Galleria on Dec. 1, 2014.

DIMITRIOS KAMBOURIS/WIREIMAGE



Latifah attends the signing of her new album *Trav'lin' Light* at Virgin Megastore on Sept. 26, 2007 in New York City.

JAMIE MCCARTHY/GETTY IMAGES



Ebony Nichols and Queen Latifah attend the 2024 Met Gala Celebrating "Sleeping Beauties: Reawakening Fashion" at The Metropolitan Museum of Art on May 6, 2024 in New York City.

A Positive Ally

While Latifah found her rhythm in the entertainment industry, questions regarding her sexual orientation always followed the star, who chose to keep the matter private early in her career. She famously spoke about the speculations around her personal life in *The New York Times* in 2008, saying, “I don’t have a problem discussing the topic of somebody being gay, but I do have a problem discussing my personal life,” she said. “You don’t get that part of me. Sorry.”

Despite remaining ambiguous about her own sexuality, Latifah never shied away from supporting others in the LGBTQ+ community.

Her role as Cleopatra Sims, a lesbian bank robber, in 1996’s *Set It Off* made her somewhat of a gay icon. In 2012, she headlined California’s annual Long Beach Pride Festival. Then, in 2021, Latifah received *BET*’s Lifetime Achievement Award. The award celebrated her long career as an actress and musician and the cultural impact she has had on the entertainment industry as a whole.

During her acceptance speech, she thanked her “sisters in the name of rap” and her friends and family. She ended her powerful speech with a shout-out to her partner Eboni Nichols and son Rebel; the first time she publicly confirmed her relationship.

“Eboni, my love. Rebel, my love. Peace. Happy Pride!” Latifah said.

Another topic Latifah has never shied away from is body image. From the start of her career, she celebrated Afro-centric Queendom to challenge Euro-centric beauty standards. In 2023, she partnered with *It’s Bigger Than Me*—a campaign aimed at not only helping people who are obese receive inclusive, compassionate care, but also educating doctors on best practices involving patients with obesity.

“Sixty-six percent of people with obesity have felt weight stigma from doctors,” Latifah told *People Magazine*. “We want to make sure people receive care that’s compassionate, safe and respectful.”

Latifah has also emphasized her disinterest in taking on roles that require her to lose weight in an unhealthy way, crediting her parents for helping her cultivate a positive self-image since childhood. It’s a sense of self-esteem the star still carries to this day.

“Health is most important to me. It’s not about losing weight or gaining weight,” Latifah continued. “If I have to do something that is going to be completely unhealthy for me, then that’s not the job for me.”

Still Reigning

Latifah’s trailblazing in the music, television and film industries and the path she has



FRAZER HARRISON/GETTY IMAGES FOR THE RECORDING ACADEMY

Queen Latifah and Monie Love perform onstage during *A GRAMMY Salute to 50 Years of Hip-Hop* on Nov. 8, 2023 in Inglewood, California.

paved for the LGBTQ+ community and body positivity has not gone unnoticed. In 2006, she became the first hip-hop artist with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame and was awarded an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree by Rutgers University. She has won a GRAMMY Award, a Golden Globe Award, two Screen Actors Guild Awards and one Primetime Emmy Award. In 2023, Latifah was the first female rapper to be honored at the Kennedy Center Honors for her lifetime of contributions to American culture in the performing arts.

Most recently, the hip-hop icon has been developing the Queen Collective, a pipeline for women and non-binary filmmakers of color in both the film and advertising industries. The organization partners with Procter & Gamble, Flavor Unit Entertainment and Tribeca Studios and hopes to accelerate gender and racial equality behind the camera by opening doors for mul-

ticultural women creators. Its impact is already being felt, as the Queen Collective released six new films in 2022 alone.

Latifah is also passing the mic with her other project, the “Unity in the Community” podcast. The podcast highlights local unsung changemakers in their communities. Episodes have featured community leaders like educator and community activist Dr. Rashida Govan, the founder of New Orleans-based nonprofit Project Butterfly, and Walter Green, a restaurateur based in Latifah’s hometown of Newark, New Jersey who is working to combat food insecurity in the community.

The undisputed queen of hip-hop is still ruling as a woman boss and powerhouse. She credits her success to the music that started it all.

“I thank God for hip-hop music because if it weren’t for hip-hop music, I wouldn’t be here, and I don’t know if those doors would have opened to create this path,” Latifah said.



SGRANTZ/WIREIMAGE

Latifah with her mother, Rita Owens, during her Hollywood Walk of Fame presentation.



KENT NISHIMURA/APP VIA GETTY IMAGES

The 2023 honorees—Renee Fleming (from left), Barry Gibb, Queen Latifah, Billy Crystal and Dionne Warwick—are pictured on screen as host Gloria Estefan opens the show during the 46th Kennedy Center Honors on Dec. 3, 2023, in Washington, D.C.



CHRISTOPHER POLK/GETTY IMAGES FOR THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARDS

Queen Latifah accepts the Favorite New Talk Show Host award for *The Queen Latifah Show* onstage at the 40th Annual People's Choice Awards at Nokia Theatre on Jan. 8, 2014 in Los Angeles.

California Opens the Nation's First Transgender Voting Center

California has become the first state in the nation to provide a safe voting center for transgender people. The Connie Norman Transgender Empowerment Center (CONOTEC) is the first voting center to be specifically designated for transgender and nonbinary (TGI) patrons, offering a safe space for these and all members of the LGBTQ+ community to vote in Los Angeles County.

CONOTEC opened its doors during California's primary elections in March and will reopen for the presidential election in November.

While the center is not exclusive to the LGBTQ+ community and welcomes all Los Angeles County voters, it does have a particular emphasis on serving as a safe and empowering place for trans, nonbinary and other LGBTQ+ individuals who have been under increasing verbal, political and physical discrimination across the country. CONOTEC's designation comes as the TGI community mourns the tragic death of nonbinary teen Nex Benedict in Oklahoma.

The voting center became officially designated thanks to partnerships formed with FLUX, an affinity group of the AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF), dedicated to creating safe spaces for trans and gender non-conforming individuals through advocacy and outreach; the Unique Woman's Coalition (UWC), an organization centered on the narratives and needs of Black trans culture; and the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), the nation's largest LGBTQ+ political advocacy organization.

"I couldn't be prouder that LA's fifth council district is now home to the first voting center in the nation located in a transgender facility," said Los Angeles City Councilwoman Katy Yaroslavsky. "As extremists across the country continue their endless attacks on both the



JESSICA RINALDI/THE BOSTON GLOBE VIA GETTY IMAGES

LGBTQ+ community and our democracy, Los Angeles must stand as a beacon of hope. I want to thank CONOTEC for opening this voting center and for the critical work they

LGBTQ+ community may be historic, but others are hoping that its presence is just the beginning. With anti-LGBTQ+ legislation—especially around the TGI community—be-

al opportunities, training, support and medical services for transgender people living in LA on a year-round basis.

"The opening of the nation's first transgender voting center today in Los Angeles marks a significant milestone in our efforts to champion equity, inclusivity and LGBTQ+ rights in California," said Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kounalakis. "By providing a safe and affirming space for the transgender community to exercise their fundamental right to vote, we are breaking down barriers and ensuring every Californian has equal access to the ballot box."

For more information on CONOTEC, as well as the other resources it provides for the LGBTQ+ community, visit connienorman.org.

"By providing a safe and affirming space for the transgender community to exercise their fundamental right to vote, we are breaking down barriers and ensuring every Californian has equal access to the ballot box."

- Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kounalakis

do every day to support the needs of the Los Angeles transgender and nonbinary community."

California's decision to create an inclusive voting center for the

coming more frequent, providing safe voting centers would allow more people to make their voices heard.

CONOTEC also offers education-

How Communities Across the Country are Celebrating Juneteenth



As Juneteenth is officially recognized as a federal holiday, communities from across the nation are coming together to celebrate in their own unique ways. Here are just some of the celebrations happening this year:

Galveston, Texas

As the home of some of the earliest Juneteenth celebrations, Galveston was the last place to be informed of the emancipation proclamation two years after its passing. For decades, people have journeyed to the city year after year to celebrate in the exact location where Juneteenth was born. This year, people can visit to commemorate Juneteenth by attending the Galveston Festival, complete with a celebratory picnic and parade, attend the Emancipation Gospel Celebration that's put on by the Juneteenth Legacy Project and attend the 45th annual reading of the Emancipation Proclamation on June 19th.

Los Angeles, California

In the city famous for film and

television, Los Angeles has one of the most extensive rosters of celebratory events in the country. Those celebrating the holiday can attend special screenings of movies and television shows starring and created by Black creatives, go to special museum exhibits honoring Black history or attend one of the festivals happening throughout the city. Two of the most popular celebrations are the Juneteenth Festival in Leimert Park Village and the 3rd annual Juneteenth: A Global Celebration Concert, featuring Black musicians and artists.

Washington, D.C.

Known not only for its politics, but for its rich history and educational centers, Washington D.C. museums are what bring the city's Juneteenth celebrations to life. Across the numerous Smithsonian museums, the public is invited to learn about Black and African American culture, art, history and contributions during the month of June and around June 19th. Washington D.C. is also home to the

original Emancipation Proclamation document, the Black Lives Matter Plaza and the Home Rule music festival—all of which are also commonly visited in celebration.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Philadelphia is home to some of the largest Juneteenth celebrations in the country. Each year, the entire city comes together for the Philadelphia Juneteenth Parade and Festival—a series of celebratory activities and events scattered across the city. The day's events include a parade, concerts, art shows, a marketplace, youth activities and even a Miss Juneteenth beauty pageant. These events are free to the public, create opportunities to celebrate Black-owned businesses and are dedicated to bringing Philly's communities together in a cultural and historical celebration.

New York, New York

In one of the most well-known cities in America, New York takes its celebrations beyond the June

19th date. With over 20,000 attendees a year, New York is home to the Juneteenth NY Festival, which strives to educate as much as it celebrates. Seminars and educational talks (also available online) are offered, as well as art and music showcases, theatrical performances, concerts, family events and a fashion show. These events take place over several days on and around the Juneteenth holiday.

Chicago, Illinois

Each year, Chicago celebrates Juneteenth with its annual Family Festival, held in Chicago's Morgan Park. The free event not only includes classic festival activities such as live music, dancing, marketplaces and food, but also offers health and wellness resources free of charge. Attendees can receive free health screenings, vaccinations, dental exams and mental health care resources. As its name implies, the event is fully family friendly and includes a plethora of activities for children of all ages to enjoy.

Benefits of Earning Your MBA



If you're looking to take on more managerial positions, chances are you've considered earning your Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree. While you may have heard about some of the benefits of having this degree, many managers achieve their positions without it. Does having an MBA actually give you an advantage? And what can you do with it? Here are some of the top reasons why you should get your MBA:

A Career Boost

An MBA shows employers that you're ready to take on managerial positions, even if you don't have a ton of experience. It takes a lot longer for those who don't have this degree to obtain the proper expertise. Earning your MBA not only allows you to work while

you study and provides workplace opportunities you may otherwise not have access to; it can also get you into higher-level, higher-paying positions faster than your peers.

Ideal for Busy Schedules

One of the biggest concerns with going back to school is how your time in the classroom will balance with your work and family schedule. MBAs are some of the most manageable degrees to fit into an impacted schedule. They often offer part-time enrollment—allowing you to gain job experience while you enhance your managerial skills—and are also known for their virtual programs. Online MBAs are not only cheaper than earning your degree in person but allow you to earn your degree at your own pace on your schedule.

Develop Your Interests

MBAs have specialties that allow you to learn precisely what you need for your desired field. While there is a “general management” concentration, you can also specialize in international business, operations management, marketing, human resources and even entrepreneurship. These specialties will allow you to enter your desired field, earning a higher salary sooner than someone without one. MBAs are also a great opportunity to explore different specialties and discover which one is right for you.

Work Anywhere

Management positions exist in virtually every industry in the working world. This means you can take your MBA to just about

any town, state or country in the world and find a job. It's a great asset to have, especially when it comes to looking for new work in new locations. MBAs are also highly transferrable into business ownership or entrepreneurial opportunities, giving you a leg up if you decide to pivot into the “work for yourself” career model.

Expand Your Network

Your MBA peers offer a whole new network of professionals across industries and expertise that may help you in the future. From study partners to future business partners, the people you meet through your MBA program can provide you with an advantage in your chosen industry, a diverse perspective in the business world or even help you with a job referral after graduation.



You belong here.

Discover a welcoming and inclusive community at **McGeorge School of Law**. Our supportive environment fosters growth and success for all students. With a commitment to equity and inclusion, McGeorge ensures that every voice is heard and valued. Become part of a vibrant community that empowers you to thrive academically and personally. **Apply now** and unleash your potential at McGeorge!



NACAC 2024 FALL IN-PERSON & VIRTUAL COLLEGE FAIRS

NACAC 

National College Fairs

NACAC will be hosting National College Fairs and STEM College & Career Fairs in several cities across the country this fall!



Learn more at:

nacacattend.org/fairs



Tips for Finding an Inclusive Health Care Provider

Unfortunately, many health care professionals continue to be uneducated and hold bias when it comes to LGBTQ+ patients.

In 2022, a survey done by the 19th News found that 28% of LGBTQ+ patients had experienced discrimination from a health care provider compared to the 12% who don't identify with the queer community. It also found that 16% had been denied health care altogether for their sexual or gender identity, with that number jumping to 26% for gender non-conforming people. Many states are even fighting to obtain or maintain basic health care rights, especially for transgender, non-binary and gender non-conforming individuals.

With the hope that these circumstances will change in time, there are health care providers out there who have undergone the training and have the proper education to treat LGBTQ+ patients. Here are a few tips to help you find those providers:

Ask for Referrals

Asking your LGBTQ+ friends, family members and trusted individuals which health care professionals they utilize is one of the best ways to ensure you receive accepting, educated care. This person may even be willing to come with you on your first visit to initiate introductions and offer support as you begin the first stages of switching health care providers.

Utilize Local Organizations

Your local LGBTQ+ center will usually have a list of LGBTQ+-friendly health care professionals that they recommend, but these lists can also be found online through LGBTQ+-friendly organizations. One of the most recommended tools for this process is the Gay and Lesbian Medical Association's Provider



Directory, which you can visit at glma.org.

Conduct an Interview

Health care teams that already provide care to numerous LGBTQ+ patients or have LGBTQ+-identifying professionals on staff can be a great sign of inclusive health care. Before setting foot into their office, give the potential provider a call and ask if they treat other clients within the community. Does their team undergo diversity and inclusion training? Are the doctors educated in queer medical studies? This can be a great way to get a feel for their belief system before you take the time and money to schedule an appointment.

Check Their Location

Consider looking for health care in areas that are known to house a larger LGBTQ+ population. Though it's not guaranteed that every medical professional in these areas will be inclusive, you're more likely to find LGBTQ+-friendly care in cities

that frequently support and interact with queer communities than the ones that do not.

Bring Support

If you're able to, bring a trusted friend or family member—especially one that understands your health care concerns—to meet your potential health care provider. This person can not only serve as a source of support, but also a second opinion on whether the provider is the right one for you. They can help you ask the right questions, remember points of concern or advise you if they catch something undesirable about the meeting that you might have missed.

Check in With Yourself

When it comes to looking for a health care team, you are the most important person in the process. If you feel uncomfortable with a provider for any reason, you are not obligated to retain their services. However, it can be difficult to assess your feelings while engaging in

stressful scenarios. Write down a list of questions and concerns that you want to address and refer back to it when you're feeling unsure or confused about a potential provider.

Some questions to ask yourself may include:

- Does this person respect and utilize my name, correct pronouns and gender-identifying terms?
- How is this person's "bedside" manner? Do they make me feel heard?
- Would I trust this individual to treat a close friend or family member of mine?
- Does this person have a background in treating patients with my needs?

Safe Providers Exist

Despite the statistics, it's important to remember that safe, knowledgeable health care for you does exist. Remember to keep an open mind without compromising your needs and don't be afraid to utilize your resources and research. You've got this.



AWIS
ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN IN SCIENCE

Not all DEI training is effective.

While a one-hour program may help individuals become aware of their biases, reprogramming those biases requires practice.



THE SOLUTION

The Association for Women in Science (AWIS) offers a three-month experiential learning program called The Inclusion Habit® that creates more inclusive behavior through:

- daily tasks
- personal commitments
- social accountability
- gamification

ASU CASE STUDY

Dr. Patricia Rankin, Chair and Professor, Department of Physics, Arizona State University (ASU), and AWIS member, gathered a cohort of senior faculty, nontenured faculty, tenure track faculty, staff, and graduate students to try it out. “I got really excited as soon as I read about it in the AWIS News Brief,” she said. “It made sense to me that having people do something daily would be more effective than a single two-hour workshop. As a scientist, I also liked the idea of doing an experiment. Even if it didn’t work, we would still learn something.”

To start, ASU leaders shared the organization’s DEI priorities. Then participants attended a 20-minute virtual workshop on recognizing bias and taking time to put themselves in someone else’s shoes. Participants were given daily micro-commitments. They tracked their accomplishments and shared stories with each other on a social feed that provided accountability and fostered a sense of community. “The Inclusion Habit® helped form a little community of allies – and gave me a chance to interact with people in a different way than usual – including people I hadn’t previously met on campus,” Dr. Rankin confirmed.

ASU RESULTS

After following The Inclusion Habit® for three months, the ASU group’s sense of belonging increased a statistically significant 13% along the General Belongingness Scale (Malone, Pillow, & Osman, 2012). Increased belonging means less turnover and more productivity.

In addition:

- 68% self-reported they listened better
- 38% observed others listening more
- 50% felt more included
- 50% felt more connected to colleagues
- 40% felt more valued
- 53% put more heart into their job
- 45% said they think more clearly at work
- 38% felt less stressed
- 45% were more likely to stay at ASU



ASU has been designated the “most innovative” university in the country by U.S. News and World Report – seven years in a row. They embrace the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion to accomplish their audacious goals.

Do more than acknowledge biases.
Change them. Learn more at:
awis.org/increase-inclusive-behaviors/

Amber Glenn Becomes Figure Skating's First Openly Queer Champion

Amber Glenn recently achieved every female figure skater's dream when she took home top prize at the U.S. Women's Figure Skating Championship. But this wasn't just a big moment for Glenn's personal career—it was one for the queer community as well.

With her medal hanging proudly over her chest and holding the progress pride flag across her back, Glenn became the first openly queer woman to ever win the championship. Identifying as both bisexual and pansexual, Glenn first came out to the public in 2019 and has been a vocal advocate of the LGBTQ+ community ever since. This year marks the 24-year-old's ninth time competing in the competition and the first time she has won the championship prize—having won the silver medal in 2021 and the bronze in 2023.

"Being the first openly queer women's champion is incredible" Glenn told NBC Sports. "When I came out initially, I was terrified. I was scared it would affect my scores or something...it was worth it to see the amount of young people who felt more comfortable in their environments at the rink, who feel, 'Oh, I'm represented by her, and she's one of the top skaters; I don't have to try and hide the sight of me.'"

Born and raised in Texas, Glenn first started figure skating in 2004 at just five years old. She placed in many junior skating competitions throughout her teenage years and was named the 2014 Athlete Alumni Ambassador recipient by the national organization, U.S. Figure Skating. From there, Glenn began to compete and place in numerous competitions at the local, national and global level, including the U.S. Championships, the CS Lombardia Trophy and the Grand Prix of Figure Skating with the 2017 Cup of China. Her most notable wins, aside from her recent 2024 victory, include

"Being the first openly queer women's champion is incredible. When I came out initially, I was terrified. I was scared it would affect my scores or something...it was worth it to see the amount of young people who felt more comfortable in their environments at the rink."



MATTHEW STOCKMAN/GETTY IMAGES

two ISU Grand Prix bronze medals, three ISU Challenger Series medals and a top 10 placement at three ISU championships.

Throughout her teenage years, Glenn openly spoke about her experiences with ADHD, anxiety, depression and an eating disorder—having taken numerous breaks

from skating to prioritize her mental well-being. After coming out in 2019, Glenn also began speaking publicly about her sexual orientation to bring a wider representation to the LGBTQ+ community in figure skating. In an interview with Team USA, Glenn said, "I had never seen a bi or queer woman, in any sport

really, so I stayed quiet...my silence was pushed even further down by the knowledge that I was in a sport where humans judge other humans. And you don't know what the judges' personal beliefs are...my hope is that the judges—and everyone—can appreciate that I am putting my authentic self forward by being true

Amber Glenn celebrates after the medal ceremony for the women's competition during the U.S. Figure Skating Championships at Nationwide Arena on Jan. 26, 2024 in Columbus, Ohio.



MATTHEW STOCKMAN/GETTY IMAGES

Amber Glenn celebrates her first-place finish with coach Damon Allen after the Women's Free Skate during the U.S. Figure Skating Championships on Jan. 26, 2024.



JASON MOWRY/ICON SPORTSWIRE VIA GETTY IMAGES

Glenn performs at the 2024 Prevagen U.S. Figure Skating Championships in Columbus, Ohio.

to who I am.”

In 2020 and beyond, Glenn’s popularity only grew. She started placing higher at competitions, became the sixth American to land a triple Axel in an international competition and earned a spot on Team USA, where she remains the only openly queer woman.

Her achievements, dedication and success led her to one of her biggest honors yet, when she was chosen to compete on behalf of Team USA at the World Team Trophy in Tokyo in 2023—one of the most esteemed skating competitions in the world. Glenn contributed to Team USA’s gold medal win, finishing sixth in

both her segments.

Glenn’s win at the 2024 National Championship has been hailed as one of the biggest highlights of her career and a win for the LGBTQ+ community as a whole. Fans took to social media to comment on her success, with many saying that her presence in the sport is inspiration

enough. Instagram commenter @natwiswll summed it up best in his comment, stating, “We love you... thanks for being such an amazing role model for other young athletes.”

NGLCC's Annual Conference Returns: Supporting LGBTQ+ Entrepreneurs



GETTY STOCK IMAGES

In the vibrant oasis of Palm Springs, California, the National LGBT Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC) invites you to the premier event of the year—the 2024 NGLCC International Business & Leadership Conference—from July 30 to August 2nd.

As the exclusive certifying body of LGBTQ-owned businesses, NGLCC is dedicated to expanding economic opportunities and advancements for LGBTQ individuals worldwide.

At the core of NGLCC's mission is the belief that growth thrives within strong local networks. By becoming a member of your local affiliate chamber, you not only unlock local membership benefits but also gain access to complementary national certification. Currently boasting over 2,000 Certified LGBT Business Enterprise suppliers, 53 domestic affiliate chambers, 24 international affiliate chambers and 438 corporate partners, NGLCC offers a robust platform for networking and business expansion.

NGLCC doesn't just certify businesses; it empowers them to succeed. Programs like the XLRI, in partnership with industry giants like Wells Fargo and Dell Small Business, provide invaluable resources to LGBTQ-owned businesses, helping them navigate and excel in competitive markets.

In an age where digital connectivity is paramount, NGLCC stands in staunch support of initiatives like the Affordable Connectivity Program Extension Act. Ensuring equitable internet access isn't just an economic issue; it's about promoting equity and inclusivity across all facets of life. By supporting this legislation, NGLCC advocates for millions of Americans who rely on affordable internet access for work, education, health care and civic engagement.

Becoming a Certified LGBT Business Enterprise supplier opens doors to a myriad of opportunities, from national recognition by top corporations to eligibility for mentorship programs and sourcing



TAMARA FLEMING

opportunities. Additionally, certified businesses gain access to exclusive discounts and resources, further bolstering their growth and success.

The 2024 NGLCC International Business & Leadership Conference isn't just an event; it's a convergence of innovation and inclusivity. With presenting sponsors including Encore, Google, Southern California Edison, Truist, Wells Fargo, Chevron, Amazon, GSK and more, this conference promises to be the world's largest LGBTQ+ business event.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to connect with global leaders, explore dynamic speakers and chart a course for a brighter, more connected future.

Visit nglccconference.com to register and learn more about last year's event. Join us in Palm Springs, California, where innovation meets inclusivity, and where

together, we shape a world of endless possibilities. See you at the conference!



TAMARA FLEMING



TAMARA FLEMING

San Diego Festival of Science & Engineering Event Wrap-Up



COURTESY OF SAN DIEGO FESTIVAL OF SCIENCE & ENGINEERING

Intermittent rain showers couldn't keep a crowd of 17,340 from attending the 16th annual San Diego Festival of Science and Engineering, held March 2nd, 2024, at Snapdragon Stadium. It was a fantastic day filled with inspiration, education and fun! Students and families from all corners of San Diego County engaged with the innovative spectrum of STEAM in the beautiful Southern California setting, replete with hands-on activities, interactive demonstrations and energizing speakers from the festival-record 180+ exhibitors!

The San Diego Festival of Science and Engineering is the largest event of its kind in Southern California. It's a collective

effort between industry, business leaders, government, community organizations, public outreach centers, schools and school districts, academia and parents. The festival began 16 years ago and primarily focused on science and engineering, intending to provide experiential activities in these fields to diverse populations.

The overwhelming success of the formative years of the festival proved to be a catalyst for what the festival would swiftly evolve into—a comprehensive San Diego County community event that celebrates the diverse cultures, communities and populace of San Diego and works to inspire the curious young minds of our region to be-



COURTESY OF SAN DIEGO FESTIVAL OF SCIENCE & ENGINEERING

come tomorrow's STEAM leaders. The San Diego Festival of Science and Engineering is ever-growing and continually responding to and

meeting the desires and needs of the community. For more information, visit lovestemsg.org.

June

NAWBO Days

June 3-5
Washington, D.C.
nawbo.org

AFWA Connect Advance Lead Conference

June 5-7
Newport, KY
afwa.org

Pride Summit - Lesbians Who Tech

June 10-14
San Francisco, CA
lesbianswhotech.org

2024 CHRO Summit

June 12
Brooklyn, NY
conference-board.org

AAED National Conference

June 13-14
Washington, D.C.
aaaed.org

Women Lead Festival: Women Shaping the Future

June 13-14
Brooklyn, NY
conference-board.org

NABA Convention

June 17-21
Las Vegas, NV
nabainc.org

Abilities Expo

June 21-23
Chicago, IL
abilities.com

SHRM Annual Conference

June 23-26
Chicago, IL
shrm.org

USHCC Energy Summit

June 25-26
Santa Fe, NM
ushccconference.com

LULAC National Convention

June 26-29
Las Vegas, NV
lulac.org

National Women Conference

June 27-28
Las Vegas, NV
lulac.org

City Career Fair Diversity Employment Day

Multiple Events
See Calendar
citycareerfair.com

From Day One Forum

Virtual Event
Multiple Events
See Calendar
fromdayone.co

Small Business Expo

Multiple Events
See Calendar
thesmallbusinessexpo.com

Hire GI

Multiple Events
See Calendar
hiregi.com

July

NMSDC Business Diversity Leadership Summit

July 9-11
Pittsburgh, PA
nmsdc.org

NILA - Chapter Leaders Program Virtual Event

July 12-13
shpe.org

115th NAACP National Convention

July 13-17
Las Vegas, NV
naacp.org

UNIDOS Annual Conference

July 15-17
Las Vegas, NV
unidosus.org

Disability IN

July 15-18
Las Vegas, NV
disabilityin.org

ERG Strategic Leadership Summit

July 16-17
San Antonio, TX
ceo.usc.edu/event

NCOA's 2024 Annual Conference

July 16-19
Saint Paul, MN
ncoausa.org

Hire GI National Virtual Career Fair Virtual Event

July 17
hiregi.com

Women Future Conference Virtual Event

July 23
womenfutureconference.com

NUL Conference

July 24-27
New Orleans, LA
nul.org

SCMSDC B3 Conference & Expo

June 27
Inglewood, CA
semsdc.org

125th VFW National Convention

July 27 – August 1
Louisville, KY
vfw.org

NGLCC Conference

July 30 – August 2
Palm Springs, CA
nglcc.org

BDPA National Conference & Career Expo

July 31 – August 4
Atlanta, GA
bdpa.org

City Career Fair Diversity Employment Day

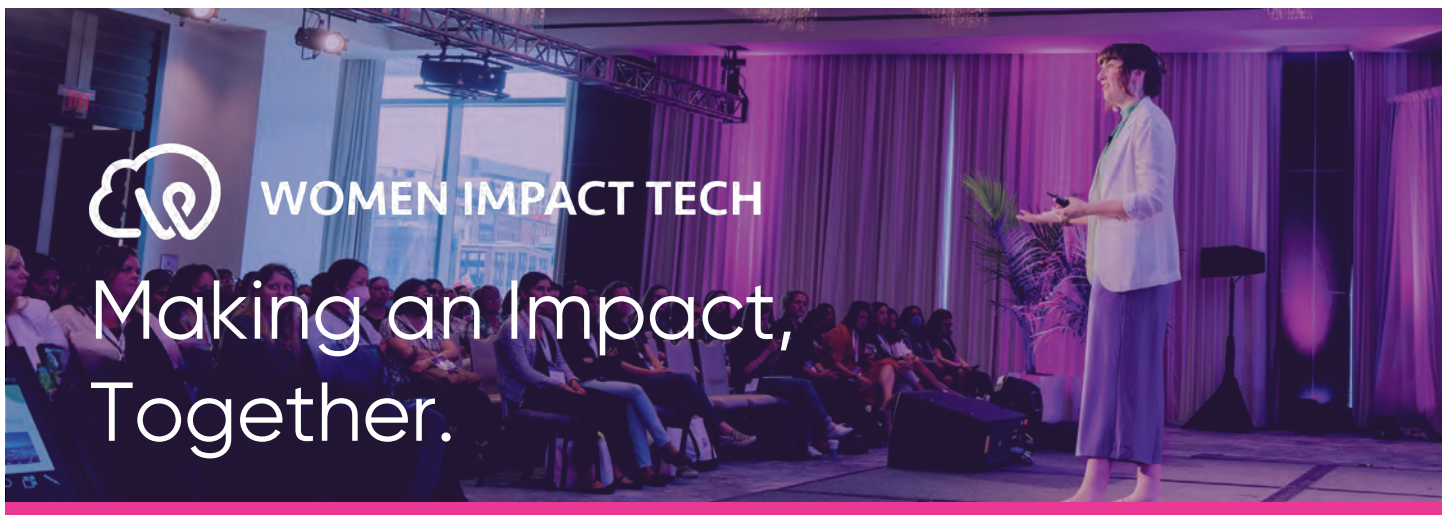
Multiple Events
See Calendar
citycareerfair.com

Hire GI

Multiple Events
See Calendar
hiregi.com

From Day One Forum Virtual Event

Multiple Events
See Calendar
fromdayone.co



WOMEN IMPACT TECH

Making an Impact,
Together.

CLOSING THE GENDER GAP IN TECH

An Inclusive Community Empowering Women In Tech

Women Impact Tech is a safe haven for collaboration, professional growth, and belonging that will inspire, educate, empower, and advance women in technology. Our mission is to advance gender equity so women can thrive in their careers and organizations can build productive, diverse, and inclusive teams.

We deliver on our mission through our in-person and virtual conference series, hosted in major tech cities, which is designed to connect progressive organizations with local tech professionals.

There's a job in tech for **EVERYONE**



Scan the QR code to
access our job board



Learning

Our conferences feature keynote speeches, workshops, and panel discussions on various tech-related topics. Learn new skills, stay up to date with the latest trends, and gain insights from industry experts.



Community

Our conferences provide a sense of community for women in tech. Connect with other women who share your experiences and challenges, and find support and encouragement.



Career Advancement

Meet with progressive companies who are committed to diversity and inclusion. You can learn about new career opportunities, gain valuable skills, and make connections that can help you advance in your career.



Women Impact Tech is a Certified LGBT Business Enterprise and WBENC-Certified WBE. Learn more at www.womenimpacttech.com or email events@womenimpacttech.com.



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COMING TO HARLEM



URBAN LEAGUE EMPOWERMENT CENTER

Where Transformative Innovation & Impactful Change Intersect

The Urban League Empowerment Center is one of the most significant economic development projects in Harlem in 50 years. Located in Harlem at 117 W. 125th St. near Malcolm X Boulevard, the Empowerment Center marks the National Urban League's return to Harlem, where our movement began in 1910.

HIGHLIGHTS

- National Urban League Headquarters
- Urban Civil Rights Museum in Harlem
- First Class Retail
- Affordable Housing
- State-of-the-Art Conference Center
- Office, Meeting, and Learning Spaces



ABOUT THE NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE

Founded in 1910 in New York City, the National Urban League is the nation's largest historic civil rights and urban advocacy organization with 92 affiliates serving more than 3 million people annually nationwide. The Urban League Empowerment Center is among the most significant legacies of Marc H. Morial's 20+ years leading the organization.



National Urban League

Marc H. Morial, *President & CEO*

Get DiversityComm Magazine Now!

All the news & career resources you need in one monthly magazine



Visit DiversityComm.net
to begin enjoying your digital issue today

Join the
Conversation!



Scan our
QR code
and
subscribe
today!



WE WANT TO WORK WITH WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES

At California American Water, diversity and inclusion are vital to our company's success. We are committed to hiring employees and procuring suppliers that reflect the unique and diverse customers we serve throughout the state. **Over the past five years, our average spend with women-owned businesses has exceeded 10% – but we can do better.**

DOING BUSINESS WITH US

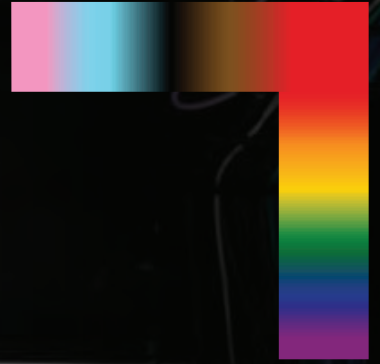
We are looking for diverse women-owned businesses that can provide water- or wastewater-related construction, engineering and other professional services, such as janitorial and landscaping. If you provide these or other related services, feel free to reach out to us to inquire about available opportunities. To register to do business with us and learn more, please visit californiaamwater.com.

EMAIL US: CAWCSupplierDiversityTeam@amwater.com



CALIFORNIA
AMERICAN WATER

WE KEEP LIFE FLOWING™



Breaking down barriers. That's Defining Possible.

We believe creating a workforce and workplace that values diversity and fosters inclusion is pivotal to promoting innovation.

ngc.com/diversity

NG
NORTHROP GRUMMAN



Diversity, equity and inclusion are at the heart of how we do business

At Liberty Mutual, we foster an atmosphere of respect, where our collective differences and similarities constantly inspire and empower us. As a global company that serves customers of different cultures and backgrounds, Liberty Mutual is committed to actively supporting and engaging an inclusive supply base.



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